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# Feeding Students? Examining Views of Parents, Students and Teachers on the World Food Program's School Feeding Initiatives in Chamwino District in Tanzania

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FEEDING STUDENTS? EXAMINING VIEWS OF PARENTS, STUDENTS AND  
TEACHERS ON THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM'S SCHOOL FEEDING INITIATIVES IN  
CHAMWINO DISTRICT IN TANZANIA.

A Master's Thesis Presented

by

BENJAMIN NGAJI OGANGA

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Directed and approved as to style and content by

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Professor BJORN HARALD NORDTVEIT

## **Dedication**

To my wife Rehema and our children Winny, Witty and Obell.

## **Acknowledgement**

The results of this study have been made successful due to the contributions, motivations and encouragements from different individuals and institutions. Without them, this work couldn't have been successful.

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May the Almighty God be with you all.

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ABSTRACT

School feeding programs have become a worldwide phenomenon and an agenda pushed by the International Development Agencies such as the World Food Program (WFP) with the assumption that it may contribute towards addressing barriers to poor students' enrollment and retention in primary schools in developing countries. The assumption is that, because of hunger and low income, parents are mostly likely not motivated to send their children to school; and on the other hand, children too may not effectively concentrate in learning and therefore are likely to drop out of schools. Different studies have shown the effectiveness of the school-feeding program in increasing students' enrollments, reducing students' dropout and improving students' health. However, most available studies do not show how the parents, teachers and students who are the key stakeholders of the program perceive the school feeding program in increasing students' enrolment and reducing students drop out rate in developing countries.

Using school feeding program implemented by WFP in Chamwino district (in Dodoma Tanzania) as a case study, this study investigated the perceptions of parents, teachers and students on the contribution of school feeding program to increasing students' enrollment and reducing students' dropout rate. Sustainability of the school feeding program was also part of this study. The study used mixed methods of data collection, including focus group discussions, informal interviews and questionnaires to unveil the parents', teachers' and students' perceptions towards the school feeding program. The collected data (qualitative and quantitative) were then tabulated, transcribed and analyzed using SPSS. While results on one hand show that parents and teachers considers school feeding as an effective tool to make students enroll in primary school; students' perception is that school feeding is not an effective factor to make them enroll or to prevent dropout. The study recommends policy options and more areas that need further research.

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## **SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the study**

The United Nation's Millennium Development Goal 2 on education requires an increased enrollment of students in primary schools and the reduction of the gender gap in enrollment in primary schools (UNDP, 2012). Program and policy options to achieve this goal range from teacher training, abolition of school fees, and gender based campaigns to mandate student enrollments (UNESCO, 2010; UNDP, 2012). In order for Tanzania to meet the objective of the MDG goal 2 of enrolling more students in primary schools, the government among other things decided to increase the number of primary schools and abolished school fees for primary schools. As a result, the students' enrollment in primary schools in Tanzania increased from 53.07 percent in 2000 to 97 percent in 2010 (Uwezo, 2011). Other initiatives taken by the International Community and local governments internationally to address the problem of students' dropout include but are not limited to the conditional cash transfers to poor families, provision of free school uniforms, exercise books and pens, as in the cases of India and Bangladesh (Jomaa, L.H., McDonnell, E., & Probart, C., 2011).

Despite the initiatives taken by the international community and the governments in the developing countries where students' enrollment in schools are reported low and poor, many children are still reported being out of schools in developing countries. Only 59 percent of students enrolled in primary schools in the low-income countries finished primary school (UNESCO, 2012). It is estimated that, more than one million school-age children are still out of school and that two thirds of them are girls living in rural areas in the most vulnerable regions of developing countries (Jomaa et al., 2011). Many factors are explaining why most of the school

age children are still out of school including persistence of poverty, hunger and malnutrition (Jomaa, L.H. et al, 2011).

Although the reports show that there is an increase of students' enrolment in primary schools in Tanzania, still about 20 – 30 percent drops out of the schools particularly in the rural areas (Uwezo, 2011). Higher dropout rates of children in rural primary schools is a result of factors like increased poverty, hunger, parents' resistance to send their children to formal education and parents' level of education in the rural areas of Tanzania (URT, 2010).

### **Statement of the problem**

Despite the fact that students' enrollment in primary schools in Tanzania has increased since 2000 (MoEVT, 2010), still many students are reported dropping out or not going to school in the rural areas (Twaweza, 2011). Hunger, illness, frequent truancy, lack of school requirements among other factors have been reported as the cause of poor enrollment and high dropout rates in schools in the rural areas of Tanzania (Twaweza, 2011). School feeding was assumed as a measure to address the problem of students' enrollment and dropout in some hunger prone regions in the country. The available empirical studies shows that, school feeding has positively contributed to students enrollment and reduced students' dropout in primary schools in many developing countries (Jomaa et al., 2011). Although the available studies may show that school feeding program has contributed to students' enrollment and reduction of students' dropout rate, they are limited in some cases that most of them were done in developed countries, and few done in Africa. This makes the results of the available studies questionable in other African contexts, such as in Tanzania. Apart from that, while they are key beneficiaries of the program, the

available studies did not include the perspectives of the parents, students and teachers while studying the effectiveness of the school feeding program on increasing students enrollment and addressing students dropout in primary schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate views of the parents, children and teachers on the effectiveness of school feeding program, particularly on its effect to increase students' enrollment, and on the maintaining of students' retention, as well as the program's sustainability in Chamwino district, Dodoma region in Tanzania.

### **Significance of the study**

There are many researches done on the role of school feeding programs, and particularly on their effects on improving students' health, nutrition, performance and students' cognition in developing countries (Jomaa, L.H.et al., 2011; Omwami, E. M., Neumann, C., & Bwibo, N. O. 2011). Some of the works too have shown the effects of school feeding program on students' achievement and its implications to both health and education policies (Jomaa, et al., 2011; Ahmed, 2006). Despite the fact that studies on school feeding programs are available, still there is a lack of studies that directly deal with program beneficiaries like parents, children and teachers by investigation their views and/or opinions on school feeding programs. Again, most of the available studies were done in developed countries and very few from Asia and Africa. Therefore, there is a great need to conduct more research on school feeding programs in the developing countries where there is a great problem of hunger/poverty and where most of the students' learning gets affected because of their level of poverty. Studies should incorporate

views or perceptions of students, teachers and parents on what do they consider as the contributions of the programs to students' enrollment, retention and the future of the program's sustainability. Studies that are neglecting or not incorporating views of these groups are missing a very crucial component that may help in future planning of other school feeding programs. This study was thus aimed at filling that research gap by investigating perceptions or views of parents, teachers and children on school feeding program particularly on the contributions of the program to students' enrollment, retention and their suggestions as ways to make the program sustainable.

For planning purposes, the results of this study will help the program to determine how to incorporate or make parents, teachers and students active members of the program. This is because, in countries like Tanzania, the morale of citizens' participation to the development programs has been reported low just because the planners does not considered them in the planning process or ignore the children as "minors" during the planning process. As a result, some of the programs have been reported not successful. In addition to that, researchers, policy makers and academicians will find the results of this study useful as both source of information and knowledge.

### **Research Questions**

The research will be guided by the following questions:

- i. How do parents, students and teachers view the contribution of school feeding to the increase of students' enrollment in primary schools?
- ii. How do parents, students and teachers view the school feeding on reducing students' dropout in primary schools?



- iii. What do parents, children and teachers perceive as the challenges of school feeding program in Chamwino district
- iv. What do parents and teachers perceive as the best ways to sustain the program?

### **My biographical note in relation to the study**

My interest to school feeding is derived by the fact that I like food. But again, food is the basic need for all human beings' survival. My experience with school feeding goes back in 1980s when I joined primary school in Tarime District, Mara region. In those days, I used to take cooked food with me to school; my fellow students too did the same. Not all of us were able to bring food from home on every school day. Sitting under the trees in the school, we shared food with those who could not bring food from their homes during the break time, usually it was around 10.00 – 10.30am of the school days. I sometimes did not go home for lunch for two reasons; either there were no food at home or because of discouragement of the distance from home to school. Many of us had the same problem.

In 2008 when I was transferred to Kigoma region (Western part of Tanzania), the regional government wanted to introduce school feeding program to its all primary schools in the region. In addition to other reasons that might be there, the program failed because parents were not willing to contribute food to schools. This sparked my desire to want to understand why parents were not willing to contribute food to schools while their children were going hungry to schools? When I was asked to present an idea of my research topic, I thought that this was the best one of my interest.

My interest and my experience may have affected the results of this study in one way or the other. To minimize the influence of my interest in the study, I decided not to do the study in the region where I am currently working. I instead chose to go to the other region that was new to me.

### **Study Outline**

For clarity purposes, this master's thesis has been divided into five sections. The first section is introducing the study by giving the study background, statement of the problem, research questions and my personal background in school feeding and school feeding program. The second section is on reviewing the literature. In this section I studied different literatures – both gray and empirical studies on school feeding programs with much emphasis in Africa and particularly East Africa. The third section clearly elaborates methods that I used to collect, organize, analyze and present data. The fourth section is presenting and discussing the study's findings. The fifth section presents the summary of findings, discussions, recommendations and conclusion of the study. The last part includes attachments (annexes) that helped me to accomplish the study.

## **SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

This section explains different studies and perspective in the field of school feeding. It presents study findings as done by different researchers in different parts of the world (with emphasis on developing countries) on the impact of school feeding and its impacts on education – students’ enrollment, retention, health and learning outcomes. The section begins with the definition of the school feeding and its background information in Tanzania and then continues with a brief history of school feeding program in the developed countries and in Africa with focus on Tanzania. A brief history is intended here to show a reader that the idea of school feeding is not new as it might be thought. In the remaining part, I have tried to give a thorough survey of different study findings (from both empirical and gray literatures) as done in developing countries on school feeding programs and its effects on students’ enrollment, retention, health and leaning outcomes. In the conclusion part, I give the observed weakness of the surveyed literature before coming to my point as to why I think this study is important.

### **Exclusion and inclusion criteria of the literature review.**

The articles, manuscripts and gray literature included in this review were identified by using the databases such as ERIC, World Food Program headquarters’ online database, University of Massachusetts library database, PubMed, UNESCO’s database, and Google scholars search engine. The peer-reviewed articles published from the last 12 years (2000 – 2012) were screened and analyzed and those that did not meet my search criteria were excluded from the review process. I used different terms and terminologies such as school feeding, school meal, food for

education and other related terms in the search to get the required articles as they might have been classified under different titles, using different keywords. The experimental designed studies were highly given priority in the search. However, in some cases where qualitative and evaluation designs were considered relevant for this research, they were included for the review. The table below includes a summarized inclusion and exclusion criteria that I used to select empirical studies for the reviews process.

**Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Literature Review**

<b>Study characteristic</b>	<b>Inclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Exclusion criteria</b>
<b>Setting Sample</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing countries (preferably Sub-Saharan Africa)</li> <li>▪ Primary school-aged children particularly in rural settings</li> <li>▪ Pre-primary school, if it is in rural settings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ From developed countries</li> <li>▪ On children in nursery schools, preschoolers, infants and toddlers in urban areas.</li> <li>▪ Children in secondary schools and above</li> <li>▪ Primary schools in urban settings</li> </ul>
<b>Type of Intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Effects of school feeding or in-school meals either in forms of fortified meals, snacks, take home food rations to students' enrollment and other school outcomes. Studies that combine both school outcomes and students health were also considered for the review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health interventions/nutrition intervention, deworming and other supplements that are not part of school meals.</li> </ul>
<b>Publication Timeframe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ From the year 2000 to 2012</li> <li>▪ Gray literatures published before 2000 but considered relevant for the study were used in rare cases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Published before 2000</li> </ul>

## **Education System in Tanzania**

Currently, the formal education system of Tanzania is made up of two years of pre-primary education; seven years of primary education; four years of junior secondary education, two years of senior secondary education and up to three or more years of tertiary education. Generally, the education system in Tanzania is made up of two levels, the basic education (pre-primary, primary), secondary education (junior secondary and senior secondary) and tertiary level (higher learning institutions).

From the time when Julius Nyerere – the First President of Tanzania (by then Tanganyika) assumed power in 1962, Tanzania has consistently adopted many education policies and programs that aimed at reducing ignorance and illiteracy among Tanzanians for the purpose of ensuring the country's economic growth and development. Some of those policies and programs includes the Arusha Declaration (*Azimio la Arusha*) 1967; the Musoma Resolution (*Azimio la Musoma*) in 1974, the Universal Primary Education of 1977 – UPE (*Elimu kwa wote*) and the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) in 2001 – a program launched under the Millennium Development Goals in the 2000s (URT, 2010). The objectives of all these initiatives were to expand access to primary schools, improve the quality of schools and increase retention levels.

Despite of all these efforts, by 2010, studies reports that only 4.5 million children of primary school age were enrolled in schools in Tanzania (URT, 2010). The reports also show that about three million children of age 7 – 13 were out of school up to the 2000s. This was not consistent to the National Development Vision 2020, MKUKUTA<sup>1</sup> and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that require all children of school age to be in schools.

In fact, since the abolition of school fees was implemented in the country, the net enrollment rate for children of 7 – 13 years age has increased from 59% in 2001 to 94 % in 2011. However, across the country, the net enrollment rate still differs from one region to the other. For example, the highest net enrollment rate has been observed in Kilimanjaro and Tanga (79%) with the lowest enrollment being in Rukwa (58%) and Mtwara (60%) while net enrollment rate in Dodoma is 73% (WFP, 2010). Although the country observed a higher net enrollment rate, still studies show that there are high dropout rates, particularly among 14 years old school children. A study by (Uwezo, 2011) shows that the reasons of higher dropout rates in Tanzania is related to truancy (67%), death (6%), lack of school requirements 4%), illness (2%), parents/guardians illness (1%) and others (15%). The dropout rate is higher than the average among students in grade 1 by nine percent and 4 by twenty two percent and the reasons being grade repetition, low achievements, over age enrollers and regular absence from schools (Uwezo, 2011).

To address that situation, the government of the United Republic of Tanzania took different initiatives. Among the initiatives included introduction of school feeding programs in collaboration with the WFP in some of the regions that seemed to be food insecure like Dodoma,

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<sup>1</sup> MKUKUTA is a Kiswahili acronym for the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty in Tanzania.

Arusha, Singida and Manyara. Other initiatives were the abolition of school fees and enforcing regulations that compels parents to send their children of school age to schools.

### **Definition of the School Feeding Program**

In this study I am defining school feeding program as the provision of cooked or raw foods to school-going children. There are two modalities of the school feeding programs (Jomaa et al., 2011 and Bundy, D. et al. 2009).

- On-site meals or snacks – where children are given food to support their access to education and enhance learning by reducing short-term hunger.
- Take home rations- food given to school children as a condition for school attendance. The arrangements can be made to give them (children) raw foods at every end/beginning of the week or month and to only those who attend school regularly as they are required by the school regulations.

In countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India and Laos PDR, conditional cash transfers are used instead of take-home food rations or on-site meals (Bundy et al., 2009). In some places too school feeding program are implemented in order to target vulnerable children in the families like orphans, disabled children and girls (Bundy et al., 2009).

On-site school feeding programs have remained popular for many years since the initial ideas of the school feeding got introduced because of its strengths in attracting students to schools as opposed to take-home rations. Onsite program has four main options such as provision of breakfast, midmorning snacks, lunch and dinner (especially for boarding school students).

In terms of costs, school feeding programs involves some costs like purchase of the cooking stoves, construction of the kitchen, provision of water for cooking, collection of firewood or charcoals and payments to cooks and the security guards. Take-home rations are considered cheaper than the on-site model as it requires fewer resources. In low resources countries where parents cannot contribute to the program for long time, parents are involved in the program by building kitchens, contributing some money to pay cooks and security guards. This is different from places that are in conflicts where parents contribute nothing as they are considered not settled and they therefore have limited sources of income.

In Chamwino district where I did the study, the school-feeding model that exists is on-site meals where students get breakfast and lunch in schools. The program was introduced in the district in 2000 as a means to address some of the schooling problems that were associated with hunger in the district. Their breakfast is porridge made of maize floors and sugar. Their lunch is *ugali*<sup>2</sup> with beans and pigeon peas (*mbaazi*). In the year 2012, all primary school students totaling 54,747 (28,264 females and 28, 264 males) were enrolled in the school feeding program in the district. A table below shows types of foods and food rationing per beneficiary.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ugali* (also sometimes called *sima*, *sembe* or *posho*) is a dish of maize flour (cornmeal) cooked with water to a porridge- or dough-like consistency. It is the most common staple starch featured in the local cuisines of the eastern African Great Lakes region and Southern Africa. When *ugali* is made from another starch, it is usually given a specific regional name.



**Table 2: Daily food ration per beneficiary**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Ration</b>	<b>Calories</b>	<b>Protein</b>	<b>Fat</b>
	<b>(gram)</b>	<b>(Kcal)</b>	<b>(gram)</b>	<b>(gram)</b>
Cereal	120	420	12	5.8
Pulses	30	101	6.6	0.5
Vegetable Oil	5	45	-	5
CSB	40	152	7.2	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>13.7</b>
<b>Minimum recommended value</b>		2,100	45.6	50.0
<b>% supplied by ration</b>		<b>34.2%</b>	<b>56.6%</b>	<b>27.3%</b>

Source: WFP Tanzania, Dodoma Office.

### **Background of the School Feeding Program**

The idea of the school meal or school feeding is not a new phenomenon. In Europe for example, its history “dates back from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century” (Evans, C. E. L. and Harper, C. E. 2009, p.2) resulting from the effects of both the industrial revolution and of the World War II (Burnett, C., 2008; Bryant, 1913). It is reported that, because of the economic crises, most of the families were unable to meet food costs and schoolchildren were therefore affected too (Bryant, L.S., 1913; Burnett, 2008). Benjamin Thompson (also known as Count Rumford) established the first known school-feeding program in Europe in Munich, Germany in 1790; his idea was to feed the hungry children. Thompson’s idea spread very quickly in other European countries and became introduced by charities and later by governments who enacted laws for the implementation of the

school meals in the schools. Literature shows that, school meal programs in Europe were introduced in different periods from one country to the other. For example, it was introduced in Britain in 1789 at the first time in Manchester before being made national by the government in 1905. In Britain for example, “...in 1920 about one million children were taking school meals” (Evans & Harper, 2009, p.2). Other countries that also introduced school meals include France (1865), Holland (1900), Switzerland (1930) and Italy (1890s). Food was introduced in schools in USA under the National School Lunch Program in 1946 and it became operational in both public and in private schools.

In Africa, during the colonial times, school meals were available to students in the boarding schools that were owned by the colonial governments and by the missionaries. Students who were in day schools did not get food at schools and instead they carried cooked foods that they had to eat during lunch hours (noon hours). They had to carry food because schools were scarce and sometimes not available to their nearby villages and thus students had to travel long distance like five or more kilometers to and from schools. However, very few had access to schools during the colonial times. The situation continued even after independence until 1990s when the idea of school meals was introduced by the United Nations under the World Food Program and other international organizations like Save the Children, Oxfam, Christian Relief Services and the like. Until 2012, the program was already introduced in the regions of Dodoma, Singida, Arusha and Manyara, covering a total of 800 schools with about 600,000 school children.

### **School feeding Program in Tanzania**

School feeding in Tanzania started in the 2000 under the partnership of World Food Program and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. It is implemented only in the mainland Tanzania in the regions of Shinyanga, Dodoma, Arusha, Singida and Manyara (see the map Fig.2). However, the program covers not all schools in those regions. Only 1,166 schools with a total of 601, 572 students in 15 districts are covered by the program (see Table 3). The school-feeding program in Tanzania only covers some of the districts that are considered prone to hunger that result from long dry seasons. Poor harvests by farmers in those districts is a result of combination of factors like long dry seasons, poor agricultural technology and low level of education on the use of modern agricultural methods (URT, 2011).

The objectives of the WFP's school feeding program in Tanzania are to increase students' enrollment, attendance and concentration span among school children. It also intends to increase their learning capacity, reduce dropout rates and gender disparity in primary schools.

**Table 3: Number of schools and students covered by the school feeding program in Tanzania**

<b>Northern Zone</b>					
	<b>Districts under the program</b>	<b>Numbers of schools in the program</b>	<b>Numbers of students Receiving food</b>		
			<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	
	Longido	32	9,930	7,991	
	Monduli	54	15,091	14,004	
	Karatu	96	23,196	23,241	
	Simanjiro	71	17, 284	14, 584	
	Ngorongoro	60	17, 051	12, 884	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>82, 552</b>	<b>72, 704</b>	<b>155, 256</b>
<b>Central Zone</b>					
	Bahi	70	18, 722	18, 844	
	Kiteto	84	18, 226	17, 851	
	Chamwino	110	24, 605	25, 883	
	Kondoa	107	26, 796	26, 788	
	Iramba	107	24, 457	24, 016	
	Mpwapwa	115	26, 709	28, 518	
	Manyoni	96	27, 989	27, 593	
	Kishapu	20	4, 484	4, 598	
	Meatu	20	6, 487	6, 561	
	Shinyanga Rural	20	4, 598	5, 000	
	Singida Rural	104	23, 708	25, 162	
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>206, 781</b>	<b>210, 844</b>	446, 31 (417, 625)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1,166</b>			<b>601, 572</b>

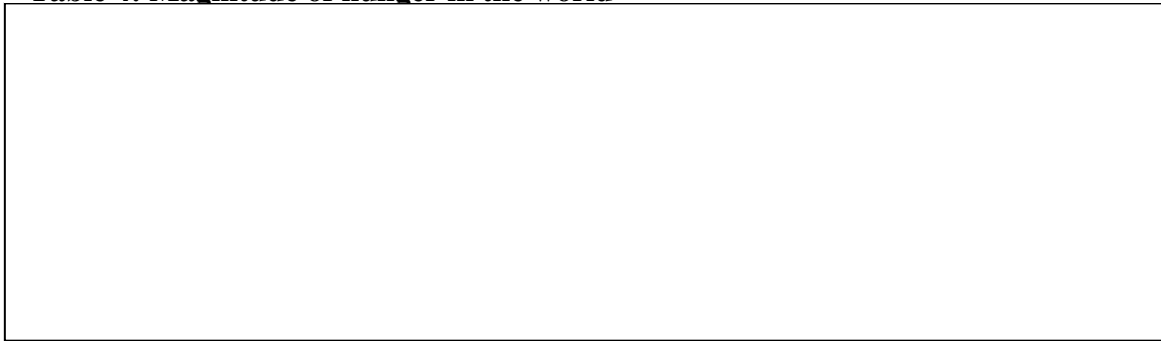
**Source:** Prime Minister's Office, Dodoma.

### **Hunger and learning**

About 870 million people in the world do not have enough to eat (FAO, 2012). The majority of that population – about 852 million living in the developing countries with 578 million from Asia and Pacific; 239 million from Sub Saharan Africa and 53 million in Latin America and Caribbean and 19 million in developed countries (FAO, 2012). In Africa, hunger is prevalent in the Sahel region areas with longer dry seasons and in conflict affected countries like Somalia,

Kenya and South Sudan. Other countries affected by hunger include Mali, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Niger (WFP, 2010). It is estimated that about 72 million children with 54 percent being girls are not in schools in developing countries. In the developed countries like the USA, according to Coleman's et al. report (2012), about 16.7 million children are reported living in households with limited or uncertain access to sufficient food and that their learning abilities are likely to be affected by hunger.

**Table 4: Magnitude of hunger in the world**

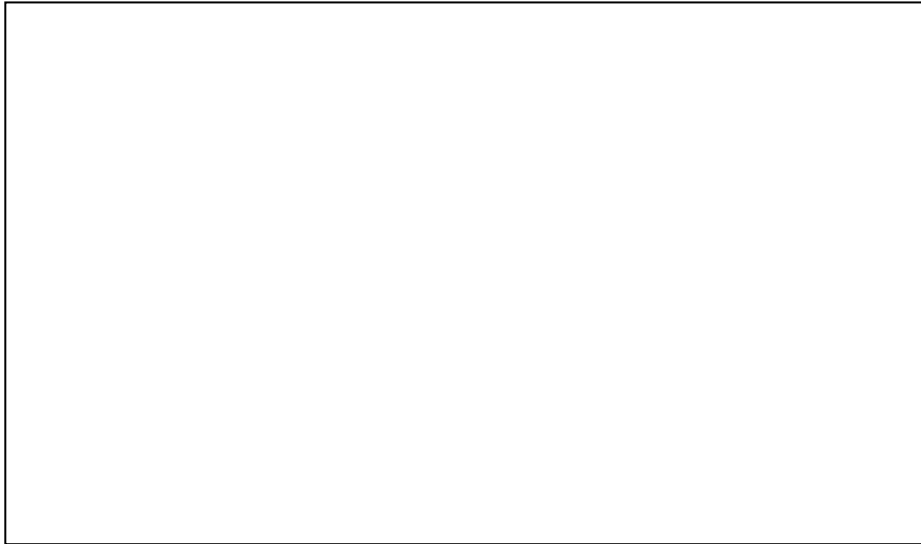


**Source: WFP, 2012**

Hunger has several negative effects to children and to household's level. For example, children coming from hunger affected families will have poorer overall health status: they get sick more often, are much more likely to have ear infections, have higher rate of iron deficiency anemia, and are hospitalized more frequently (WFP, 2006). To shorten, hunger makes children be sick and weak and as a result they will frequently miss classes and are poorly prepared to learn. In hunger affected areas many students are reported not going to school, and those in school have higher dropout rates and higher school absenteeism.

Though not marked in the worlds' hunger map as one of the food insecure countries with food self-sufficiency range of between 88 – 112 percent, Tanzania still has some regions, districts and households that are food insecure. Food insecure regions and where studies show

that students do not go to school partly because of food security includes Dodoma, Arusha, Singida and Manyara.



Source: Center on Hunger and Poverty; Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University

### **The rationale for the School Feeding Program**

School feeding has been implemented in different parts of the world with different purposes. The variation on purpose is determined by the need, resources and policies in the given country context (Bundy et al., 2009). The rationales for the implementation of the school feeding programs include the need to improve nutritional deficiencies, reduction of short term hunger, reducing absenteeism, to increase students enrolment, to improve home diet and to improve literacy as a way of breaking cycle of poverty (Greenhalgh, T., Kristjansson, E., & Robinson, V., 2008).

Generally, the objectives for the school meals are mainly three; school feeding as a social safety net, as a need to improve learning and educational outcomes, and to enhance nutrition and or health status of the schoolchildren.

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### **School feeding as a need to improve learning and educational outcomes**

The purpose of school feeding programs as the need to improve learning and educational outcomes includes encouraging students' enrollment, reducing children absenteeism and increasing level of students' participation in school activities. Food is therefore used as a “magnet” to attract schoolchildren to enroll and consistently stay in schools until they reach the seventh grade.

However, improving learning and educational outcomes for the learners is not a simple and linear process as the program may assume. It is complex and entails many factors that require thorough analysis for the objectives or goals to be achieved.

In low resources contexts like in Tanzania for example, there are several factors that may also explain or affect students' enrollment in schools. These may include, the physical environment and infrastructures of the school, distance to and from school, teachers' relations with the surrounding community, parents' perception on formal schooling, existing policies that may favor students' enrollment, and the like. The physical environment or school infrastructure, for example, may discourage or encourage students' enrollment. For example, if the infrastructures have poor or no toilets for girls (meaning no privacy for girls), poor classrooms, and studies

conducted under the trees and the like; it is very likely that such school environment will discourage students' enrollment and attendance. Several studies have shown examples that, even lack of toilets in schools have caused girls to dropout from schools in developing countries just because they lack privacy and safety when they are at school (Hunt, F. 2008).

Distance to and from can also affect students' enrollment. In developing countries where pupils go to schools on foot, if schools are further than 5 kilometers away from student's home, students (considering their age) may be less interested to go to school than if school is closer to their homes (Hunt, F. 2008). Distance to and from school in developing countries is a very strong determinant factor for students' enrollment and retention. For example, in developing countries, studies have shown that in places where schools are located far from student's home, less and less students got enrolled in schools than to places where schools were closer to their homes (Glick,P and Sahn, D.E., 2000).

Teachers' relation with the community members is another factor that may have impact on students' enrollments and retention in the developing countries. The idea of teacher relationship with the community members as a determinant factor for students' enrollment may seem new or not working in some of the developed countries, but this works very strongly in developing countries especially in rural areas where people still live in communal life systems. For example, in such societies, parents may decide not to send their children to a school in which the teachers have not been attending community activities such as burial services or who does not greet other community members when they meet in public places like in the markets. This may happen in rural communities because of the life-style and low population density, where most people know



each other. On the other hand, this may not function in a similar way in towns where populations are considerably higher and therefore parents may not be able to know or recognize teachers.

While the factors explained above may encourage students' enrollments; the absence or lack of those factors too may lead to students' school dropout. Other factor that may cause students' dropout includes frequent and or long illness, bullying, poor performance and frequent absenteeism (Hunt 2008; Glick 2000). However, still in Africa and particularly Tanzania, there are limited studies that are trying to explore the extent of bullying and how it relates to students dropout and how it affects their performances. This therefore calls for more studies that would explore the degree of bullying and its consequences to students' dropout.

Despite the fact that those factors (explained above) may affect level of students' enrollment and retention in primary schools in developing countries; still, the United Nations and the governments in collaboration with the World Food Program (which is a United Nations Agency), assume that, provision of food in schools (school meals) in the developing countries encourage students' enrollments and help to address the problem of students' dropouts in primary schools (WFP, 2010).

On the other hand, despite the complex nature of the contributions of the school feeding program to students learning and attendance (Bundy et al., 2009), the available studies – ranging from evaluations, randomized control trials and to meta-analyses studies, have shown positive results on the contribution of school feeding programs to students' enrollment and reduction of students' absenteeism in primary schools – [mostly in developing countries] (Jomaa et al., 2011). For

example, a recent meta-analysis study done by WFP in 32 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Gelli, Meir and Espejo, 2007) where they grouped 4, 000 primary schools based on those with established programs (whether on-site or take home rations), those with programs of less than twelve months, and those without the program (this latter serving as a control group) shows that there was a significant increased level of students enrollment by 28 percent (for girls) and 22 percent (for boys) during year one of the school feeding program.

Another study, a randomized control trial in Jamaica (Powel et al., 1998) where students were given breakfast for one year, indicated that there was an increase in the attendance rate by 2.3 percent more than in a control group. Similar results were also found in two different studies done in Kenya by Vermeersch and Kremer (2004) and by Omwami *et al.*, (2011). In their study Vermeersch and Kremer (2004) found that, students' participation was 30 percent higher in the treatment group where they gave breakfast to preprimary school children than in the comparison group. In the study done by Omwami *et al* (2011) in Kenya where they wanted to determine if school feeding may improve attendance rate among elementary schoolchildren in rural Kenya, they found that school meals were statistically significant predictor of school attendance rate to treatment groups than to control group.

A study in South Africa that investigated if diarrhea-related absenteeism can be reduced by the provision of fortified (iron, iodine, and vitamin A) meals found that absenteeism was reduced from 79 days to 52 days of absence while attendance rate was increased by 15 percent (Van Stuijvenberg et al., 1999).

Jomaa H.L., McDonnel, E., and Probart,C., (2011) in their very recent study where they reviewed peer-reviewed journal articles and reviews that were published over 20 years from 2010 on school feeding programs found that there were consistent positive effects of school feeding program in school enrollment and attendance of the children participating in the school feeding program than the non-participants.

Some of the studies (evaluations and randomized control trials) that also shows that school meals have significant contributions to students enrollment and retention include studies done in Bangladesh on impacts of feeding children in schools by Ahmed, (2004); Ahmed and del Ninno, (2002), a study done in Uganda on the effect of the breakfast and midday meal consumption on academic achievement of schoolchildren by (Acham et al., 2012) and a study in Pakistan on the impacts of WFPs assistance on girl's education in primary schools in the selected districts in Pakistan by (WFP Pakistan, 2005).

Apart from the effectiveness of the school feeding on encouraging students' enrollments, studies also shows that school feeding programs have positive results in improving students' cognitive abilities and improving performance in learning. This is so because schoolchildren who are going to school without breakfast or who does not get lunch before noon classes have been reported not fully participating in the classrooms and in school activities. Therefore, when they get food at school (breakfast or lunch) they become effective and fully participate in school activities. They also like school more than if they don't get lunch or breakfast at school. Recent control trial studies have proven this. For example, a study by Whaley et al., (2003) in Kenya where school children were given milk, meat or energy supplements for a total of 21 months has shown that

children who were given meat improved their arithmetic scores by 0.15 Standard Deviation (SD) and their performance on the Raven's Progressive Matrices Test (a test of nonverbal reasoning) by 0.16 SD. This same study showed that students on the other hand did not improve on comprehension or on ability to read. A similar study done by Adelman, Alderman, Gilligan, and Lehrer, (2008) in Uganda where they investigated the nutritional benefits of two Food for Education programs for two years from 2005-2007 from a sample of 2100 primary school-age children found that take-home rations improved mathematic scores for older children and led to an improvement in performance on their primary leaving examinations. Other studies that have shown positive results on the impacts of school meals to schoolchildren's cognitive enhancement and performance include studies done in Jamaica by Jukes, Drake and Bundy (2008), and in Bangladesh by Ahmed (2004).

### **School feeding as a social safety net**

Another purpose served by the school-feeding is as a social safety net. World Bank defines social safety nets as programs that are implemented by governments or NGOs in order to prevent the poor or vulnerable groups to shocks and poverty (IEG, 2011). According to the World Bank's definition, social safety nets can be in forms of conditional cash transfers, food based programs, free school uniforms or school supplies, subsidies for transport, food and electricity, fee waivers and exemptions for health and schooling costs. However, this definition has been refuted because there are some programs that do not address the poor only. For example, social safety nets have been found used in politics and in fragile states or countries in conflict settings where they may provide services (either subsidized or free) to their people just to maintain the

state power and authority (IEG, 2011). In Tanzania for example, all pregnant mothers are entitled to get free delivery services in the government hospitals without a charge or in private hospital at a reduced rate. This policy in Tanzania though may be considered as a social safety net (by World Bank's definition) but it is not targeting the poor alone, because not all women in Tanzania are unable to pay for health services [this is from my personal experience in Tanzania].

From that definition, school feeding programs are therefore considered “as a social safety net when its aim is to provide social protection instead of educational goals” (Brandy,D., et al., 2009, p.13). It is considered a social safety net as it targets also the poor and the vulnerable like orphans, disabled children in the families, girls and HIV/AIDS affected people. In school feeding programs, take home rations are considered the most effective social safety net as it makes even groups other than school children alone have access to food even while they are at home (where they may be possibly going without food if they do not benefit from such take-home rations). The other advantage of the school feeding programs as social safety net is its ability to reduce family – daily costs on food (IEG, 2011). However, available studies do not clearly show the cost implications of take home rations to households' food expenditures (Bundy et al., 2009). School meals as social safety nets (whether take home or in schools) are also assumed to be effective ways of breaking the poverty cycles in the poor families by letting the child to have motivation of going to school and which in future turns him/her to a literate and or educated parent.

### **School feeding as a means of enhancing nutrition to schoolchildren**

The programs that intend to improve nutritional deficiencies are based on the theory that, food supplements that are provided to the school going children should be rich in energy, protein and

vitamins (Bundy et al., 2009). The nutritional intakes are assumed to be able to improve health of the schoolchildren and thus enhance their growth by weight, height and cognitive performance (Vermeersch et al., 2004). The nutritional foods have also been found with positive effect not only to the targeted beneficiaries (schoolchildren) but it also have spillover effects to their younger sisters and brothers at home (Omwami et al., 2011; Bundy et al., 2009) as they share food with them at home. Take home ration and particularly fortified meals have been found very effective in distributing the effects to the other children at home like out-of-school girls and disabled children (Bundy et al., 2009).

There is still confusion however on whether nutritional foods are helpful to school-going children or not. As Bundy et al., (2009) said, nutritional deficiencies during this period are critical for the child's future growth, especially for the brain's development:

...priority in nutrition interventions is to prevent malnutrition during fetal development and the early years of life which is the most critical period for growth and development. Thus, the most cost effective nutrition interventions are those that target the first 24 months of life and those that promote maternal nutrition and thus intrauterine growth (Bundy et al., 2009, p. 27).

Researchers whose arguments are based on that perspective argues that school feeding programs that intends to improve nutritional conditions to schoolchildren are best if implemented during the maternal stage than after birth because this is the time it will have significant long-term effect on child's development (Bundy et al., 2009).

Although school feeding programs have been found less effective in improving nutritional statuses to school-going children, still studies shows that, it has intergenerational benefits to

beneficiaries as it attracts them (schoolchildren) to enroll to school, get education and thus in future become literate parents (educated mother and father). Although it seems to take time for the impact to be realized, but still, it may help break the cycle of poverty and malnutrition in a given society (Bundy et al., 2009; Kristjansson et al., 2007). The assumption is that, the “level of parents’ education is a strong determinant of child growth and development as measured by stunting” (Bundy et al., 2009; Semba et al. 2008). In addition to that, studies shows that effects of school feeding programs that are geared towards improving nutrition to school going children have been reported being effective if complemented by deworming and provision of fortified foods - refer studies in Uganda by Adelman, Aderman, Giligan and Konde-Lule (2008) and in Kenya by Adango et al., (2007).

### **The sustainability of the School Feeding Program**

Defining the word sustainability is tough if not complex one. This is because, what it means and what its meaning serves for, caters across different aspects as economics, politics, environment, and technology. The word sustainability as derived from the word “sustainable” became famous in the late 1980s after the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations on Environment of March 20, 1987 (WCED, 1987). From that commission, The World Commission on Environment (WCED) defined sustainability as “the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their future needs” (WCED, 1987, p.3). The WCED’s definition was however criticized as not sufficient to address other issues out of the earth sciences; environmental sciences and conservations and therefore, other definitions were developed too on what actually the word sustainability might be. For

example, Lele (2005) defined sustainability as “the continuity of the development either indefinitely or for the implicit time of period of concern” (p.162). To avoid continuing with the debate further, I can say that, sustainability simply means the capacity to endure or to continue. For the case of this thesis, sustainability of the school feeding program means the ability of the school feeding program to be able to be continued by the governments and communities even in the absence of the donors or external funders’.

To date, most of the school feeding programs in the developing countries are donor funded, often by the WFP, faith-based organizations like Catholic Relief Services, or other organizations, such as CARE, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Save the Children just to mention a few. In some very rare cases, school feeding programs have been found or reported run by the communities in the developing countries (Studdert et al., 2004; WFP, 2003; Andrews et al., 2011). In Tanzania for example, community funded school feeding programs are only available in the two regions of Kilimanjaro and Mtwara (see the map figure 2) and the rest of the regions have none (with exceptions of regions of Dodoma, Arusha, Manyara and Singida whose programs are funded by the WFP).


Sustainability of the school feeding programs in the developing countries [like Tanzania] is still questionable (Bundy et al., 2009; Nyongani, 2012). The questionability of the school feeding programs in the developing countries is a result of many factors like inability to produce more food (frequent food insecurity), frequent rise of food prices hence food crises, low level of agricultural technology and high dependency on rainfall for farming activities (FAO, 2003; Nyangani, 2012). Most low resource countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, have been reported hit by hunger and hence food crises resulting from the change of the weather conditions or frequent civil wars and conflicts like in Somalia, Kenya, Sierra Leone and currently Mali.



Other factors for the food shortage in Africa and in Tanzania as well, have been due to the low level of technology used in agricultural production. Most of the famers in Tanzania still rely on the use of hand hoes that does not give them more rooms or ability to cultivate big farms that may enable them to have good or surplus harvests. Because of use and over reliance on the hand hoes, farmers in Tanzania are mainly able to have small harvests that enable them to have food for short periods; not for the whole year (FAO, 2003; Meertens, 2000). In addition to that, agricultural activities in these countries still depend on the presence of rainfall, and thus, in case of environmental change leading to longer periods of drought, it is very likely that most families will experience food shortages. All these factors raise concerns and questions on the sustainability of the school feeding programs in low resource countries like Tanzania that is the focus for this study.

In realization of the need for sustainability of the school feeding program, the World Food Program has devised some strategies that would enable the developing countries to take over and be able to run the program at the end of the project. This is what they (WFP) call the *exit strategy* (WFP, 2003). The World Food Program (WFP, 2003) describes 28 countries that have transitioned more successfully from the reliance of the WFP's supported programs to government or community supported programs. The WFP's exit strategy explains important "key components" they implement in order to make sure that school feeding programs are sustainable even after their withdrawal. These are: setting milestones for achievement; government commitment; community contribution; technical support; management and communication, and involvement of the private sector. The WFP's argument is that for the exit strategy to work effectively, the said strategy may need to be tailored to the country-specific context (WFP, 2003). In their approach, the WFP further contends that, for the school feeding to be owned and

managed by the government, it has to be mainstreamed in national policies, programs, financing mechanisms and administrative structures (WFP, 2003; Bundy et al., 2009). The WFP therefore suggests five transition stages that the school feeding programs have to undergo so that, at a later stage, the government will be feeling more responsible to the school feeding program (see Fig.1).

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
	Programs rely mostly on external funding and implementation				Programs rely on national funding and implementation
Policy framework for school feeding	Limited	Increased	Strong	Strong	Strong
Government financing capacity	Limited	Moderate	Increased	Strong	Strong
Government institutional capacity	Limited	Weak	Moderate	Moderate	Strong

**Figure 1: Transitional stages of school feeding program**

While studies and reports by the WFP suggests the school feeding programs to be mainstreamed and be fully supported and funded by the governments in the developing countries, some of the studies suggest other strategies that are hoped to bring school feedings' sustainability in the developing countries. The suggested alternatives to sustainable school feeding programs comprises the establishment of school gardens (FAO<sup>3</sup>; Najjumba, 2013), community based school feeding programs (Andrews, Colin et al., 2011; Binswanger, H. and S. Aiyar. 2003),

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/a0218e/a0218e00.htm> as retrieved on 3/9/2013.

home-grown school feeding programs (HGSF<sup>4</sup>, WFP, 2003) and involvement of the private sectors in the school feeding programs (Bundy et al., 2009). Though studies suggest these alternative school feeding programs as ways to run the school feeding program without over-reliance to donors, still they does not sufficiently address the question of how the programs can for example be run in case of changes of weather; students' and teachers' time, and level and quality of food production. Again, studies that suggest the use or involving the private sectors into school feeding programs also does not properly address the question of how the said private sectors will obtain profits that basically are their core goals without jeopardizing the income levels of the already poor peasants in these countries.

To answer all these questions and the identified limitations in the literatures reviewed on the sustainability of the school feeding program particularly in the developing countries, I involved parents and teachers to investigate their perceptions on what they think would work best in the event of the absence of the external funding for school feeding programs. Students were not involved in this stage of attempting to investigate the views of the study participants towards attaining sustainable school feeding program. I intentionally did not involve students at this stage because of their age that I thought would have affected their level of reasoning into this matter (Nancy, G. and Chris, M., 2004). See the findings and discussion section of this thesis to see the revealed perceptions of the parents and teachers on the sustainability of the school feeding programs in Tanzania.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://hgsf-global.org/> as on 3/9/2013.



**Figure 2: School garden in one of the schools in West Africa**

### **Summary and Conclusion on Literature Review**

Generally, based on these findings, one may get convinced that school meals or school feeding programs are effective means of increasing students' enrollment and retention especially in the developing countries where hunger has been reported affecting children's school enrollment and attendance rate (FAO, 2012; Jomaa et al., 2011; Bundy et al., 2009). However, it should be noted with care that, students' enrollment and attendance rate alone in the developing countries are not sufficient conditions or explanations on increasing students learning and other education outcomes. There must be some of the endogenous factors to supplement it so that students can perform better in schools. Some of the factors that need to be controlled as well include quality of teaching, availability of teaching and learning materials, and school infrastructures. Students' attendance can also be determined by factors other than presence of food alone. For example, students' attendance can be influenced by parents' perceived value of education, availability of

employments after graduation, costs of schooling and availability of quality school facilities (Bundy et al., 2009). My emphasis here is that school feeding may be considered as a strategy to bring students to schools; still it cannot stand-alone without being complemented by other interventions.

Again, it is not true that the said studies (that I have reviewed here) did manage to control all factors that might have influence on students' enrollment and retention in schools like withdrawal of school fees, parents' perception on formal education, child's perception and maturation and other similar factors. This therefore calls for other approaches in studying the impact of school feeding program on students' enrollment and retention, and that is why my approach of seeking views of the parents, students and teachers would be helpful to fill in the gap in this field.

Leave alone the fact that the studies that I have reviewed might have not controlled all factors that may have influenced students' enrollment and retention; they also did not include the views of the parents on their studies. They did not seek the opinions of the key beneficiaries of the program namely parents, schoolchildren and teachers and hear from them as to what do they say about the SFP. Do parents, teachers and students see the program on the same angle as beneficial or not? Do they see it as a contributing factor for their students enrollment or their students are going to school because parents knows the value of education and therefore ready to send them to school in whatever circumstances? All these questions need to be addressed by research that incorporates parents', teachers' and students' opinions in their studies.

The question of sustainability of the school feeding program in developing countries is also a core issue in many of the studies on school feeding programs. It is still debatable however if the

proposed exit strategy by the WFP can work in countries with limited education budget. This therefore calls for further experimental designed studies that may help come up with the best and sustainable school feeding program's model that may work in the countries with low resources.

I therefore stress the importance of views or perceptions of parents, schoolchildren and teachers in the studies of the school feeding programs. Having their views and or perception will help us have a strong conclusion as whether school feeding programs are essential ingredients of schoolchildren's enrolment and participation or not. The results of this study will therefore help in filling that gap. It is also useful to the educational planners and policy makers in developing countries as they will be able to plan while knowing the perceptions of parents, teachers and students on school feeding programs.

### **SECTION THREE: STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction.**

In order to reach as many participants as I could, I employed different methods and approaches for the purpose of data collection. My approaches ranged from choice of language – Kiswahili language, setting of research questions, choice of location, how to collect data and from which sources to obtain data or information.

This section describes the methods that I used to collect data, where I collected them, what types of data and procedures I employed to collect data in the field, and which other sources I employed.

The collected data aimed at answering the following research questions:-

- i. How do parents, students and teachers view the contribution of school feeding to the increase of students' enrollment in primary schools?
- ii. How do parents, students and teachers view the school feeding on reducing students' dropout in primary schools?
- iii. What do parents, children and teachers perceive as the challenges of school feeding program in Chamwino district?
- iv. What do parents and teachers perceive as the best ways to sustain the program?

#### **Conceptual framework**

The concept of school feeding programs in low resource countries like Tanzania and others are generally aimed at achieving the Millennium Development and Education for All goals and to provide social protection to the poor (Bundy et al., 2009). The programs are targeted for food insecure areas and where it is very likely that lack of food at household's level may affect children's school attendance and learning.

During the study, I was guided with assumption that provision of meals in schools in low-income countries attracts parents to send their children to school for two reasons (see Table 6.). One, because their children will be assured of lunch and breakfast for all school days and two, that, school meal helps to reduce the cost of food at the household level because cost for the lunch is offset by the school meals. Thus, parents' decision to send their children to school because of food contributes to the increase of students' enrollment and retention in the schools.

For that reason, the immediate impact of the school feeding program would be the reduction of students' absenteeism, reduced dropout rate, increased enrollment and improved learning and cognition (Bundy et al., 2009; Ahmed, et al. 2011). However, it should be noted that the idea of school feeding programs and their results depends upon many factors and that it is a complex issue because its results would depend on the culture of the people, parents' perception on formal schooling, government support and its systems, teachers' readiness, program cost, students' age and their perceptions on the free meal(s). For example, my thought is that, students may get interested going to school because of food at the age of grade 1 and 2 but may get less interested as they get mature and know other means of getting food other than depending on food provided in schools. It is also complex because in poor countries like Tanzania where children of age 10 are counted as sources of labor force at homes, parents may have to choose between sending the child to school and foregoing the contribution of the child at home or letting the child remain at home and contribute to the household income. Opportunity cost is also higher in low resource contexts among girls since they are regarded as helpers of their siblings, helping their mothers for example to fetch water, fire wood in the bushes and with cooking duties.



**Table 6: Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		
			Initial	Intermediate	long-term
Food provided to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kitchen built</li> <li>▪ Parents mobilized to send children to schools</li> <li>▪ Food prepared in school as breakfast and lunch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pupils get breakfast for morning classes</li> <li>▪ Pupils get lunch for after noon classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Incentive for households to send pupils to school</li> <li>▪ Incentives for pupils to go to school</li> <li>▪ Improved energy intake</li> <li>▪ Relieved short term hunger in classrooms</li> <li>▪ Improved energy intake in classroom</li> <li>▪ Improved micronutrient status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduced absenteeism</li> <li>▪ Reduced drop-out</li> <li>▪ Reduced gender gap</li> <li>▪ Increased enrolment</li> <li>▪ Improve learning and cognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brocken poverty circle</li> <li>▪ Future educated parents</li> <li>▪ Literacy rate increased in the areas</li> <li>▪ Improved completion rate for primary school children</li> </ul>

Source: Designed by the Researcher

Apart from increasing students' enrollment, retention and school participation, school meals have been designed in other countries for the purpose of improving students' health, and nutrition (Bundy et al., 2009; Omwami et al., 2011). Other counted benefits of school feeding programs have been reported to reduce short term hunger, increased students' attention and participation in school and in the class (Bundy et al., 2009, Jomaa et al., Ahmed et al., 2009).

### **Settings**

Dodoma region was established during the German colonial rule in 1907 (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2012). The region is the political head quarter of Tanzania, located in the central part

of the country (see the map on figure 2). Administratively, the region is divided into six major districts namely Bahi, Chamwino, Dodoma Urban, Kondoa, Mpwapwa, and Kongwa.

Dodoma region is entirely dependent on agriculture and livestock production which is practiced mostly for household self-sufficiency. Agriculture in Dodoma is characterized by low productivity resulting from low and erratic rainfall, high evapotranspiration and low moisture holding (URT, 2011). The region is susceptible to high soil erosion and environmental degradation because of high flocks of cattle or overstocking and poor farming practices among the majority of farmers in the region. The main food staples grown in the region include sorghum, millet, cassava and maize, while major cash crops are groundnuts, sunflower and grapes. Livestock is the second main contributor to the regional economy (URT, 2011).

At a small-scale level, other economic activities such as forestry, wildlife, beekeeping, fishing and mining are also practiced in the region. These sectors have minimal impact on the regional economy because of the existing poor technological base and capacities in the region and in the country at large. According to the statistics the region's average annual per capital income in 2001 was estimated to Tsh. 154,772 (equivalent to US\$ 103.1813).

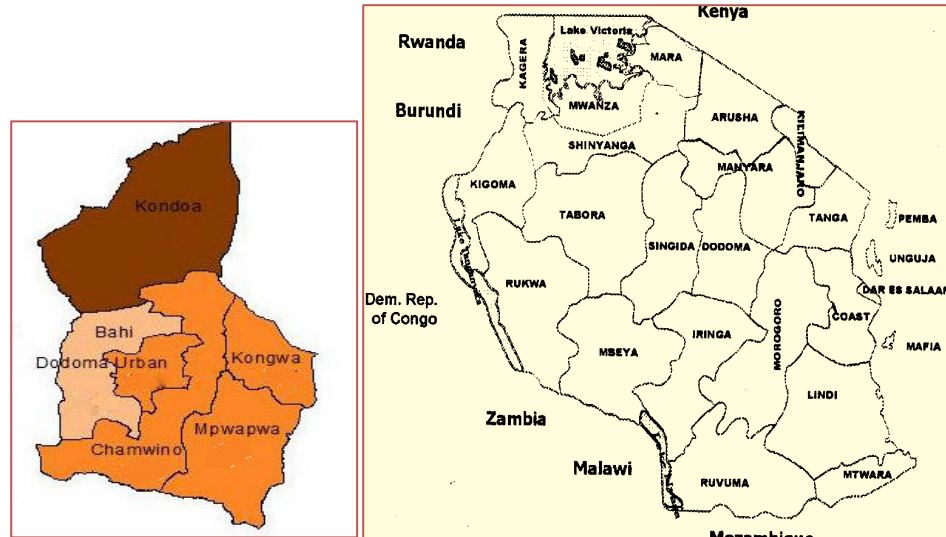
### **Chamwino District**

I specifically did this study in Chamwino district which is one among six districts of Dodoma region. Weather, geographical conditions and economic activities of Chamwino district are not unique or different from that of the whole region of Dodoma as described in the previous section. About eighty percent of the population in Chamwino district is composed of peasants and the few remaining population are civil servants such as teachers, health workers, veterinary officials, agricultural extension officers and others like businessmen- and women. I specifically selected

Chamwino district for the purpose of this study because it was one among other districts in the region where a school-feeding program was implemented by the WFP. It should be noted here that, not all districts in the region had a school-feeding program. The district was also a good study area because of its population of more than 80 percent living in rural areas, as opposed to other districts in the region where the urban population was higher.

According to the national census survey of 2012, the district's population is 330,543 (158,882 male; 171,661 female) with a projected growth rate of 1.6 percent per annum. In 2012, the district had 110 primary schools; all owned by the government with none owned by the private institutions. The total number of primary school students of grade I – VII in 2011 was 54,747 among them, females were 26,483 and 28,264 were males. In 2011, students in primary schools who completely dropped out of the school were totaling 499 (289 males and 209 females). The report shows that the reasons for the dropout were related to pregnancy, death, lack of school needs, illness and parent's/guardian's illness.

According to the survey done by the National Bureau of Statistics (URT, 2008), the general literacy rate of Dodoma region was 68.6 percent with Chamwino district having the lowest rate of 61.1 percent. The household literacy rate per head of household in Chamwino was 49 percent male and 50 percent female against the region's rate of 52% male and 48% female (NSB, 2010). According to the same statistics, Chamwino again had the lowest number of household members attending schools in the region if compared to other districts.



**Figure 3: A map of Tanzania and a sectional map of Dodoma region**

Source: Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2010

### **Choice of location**

I chose to collect data in Chamwino district in Dodoma region because of its geographic location, the level of program implementation, and social cultural factors. Chamwino is geographically located in the central part of the country and its climatic condition resembles other areas where school feeding programs are/were implemented in the country. More than 80 percent of people of Chamwino district are peasants depending on subsistence agriculture and livestock keeping. Culturally, the Gogo people resemble tribes in other areas like in Singida, Manyara and Arusha where school feeding programs are implemented. My decision of choice was also influenced by the factors that in Chamwino district, all schools are covered by the program unlike other districts that are not fully covered by the program (see Table 3). This gave me great opportunity to select schools that I had to include in my sample as opposed to other areas where my choice would have been limited to certain schools and villages only. The geographical location played another big role in my decision because of all schools in this

district being in the rural areas. Because the district was just newly formed just in 2007, still no urban-life elements are present in this district. The lack of urban-life elements was another good advantage because I was able to have participants of real village life and whose income are mainly from agriculture and or livestock.



**Figure 4: A traditional house of the Gogo tribe, Dodoma Region**

## **Sample and Sample Selection**

### **Selection procedures**

Because of limited resources and time, I conducted the research at one place, Chamwino district. I chose 8 schools, 80 school children, 40 teachers and 40 parents to conduct the study: the randomly selected 8 primary schools (all government schools) excluded private schools and pre-primary schools. I did this with the intention that private schools are much better and therefore

differ from public schools in terms of facilities, number of teachers and teaching quality. Again in developing countries, parents whose children are in private schools are considered having better living standards than parents with children in the public schools (Hunt, F., 2008).

From each school, I purposively chose 10 pupils in total. I selected 2 (one male and one female) pupils who can read and write from each class from grade 3 – 7. The ability to read and write was pre-determined by their classroom teachers whom we teamed up in the selection processes. I purposively needed those who could read and write because they had to fill in the questionnaires after face-to-face interviews. I also, purposively chose 5 teachers from each of the selected schools in the district to participate in the study. The 5 teachers included – the school Head Teacher, Academic Master, a teacher who is responsible for the food program in the school, the assistant Headmaster and one female or male teacher (depending on which sex outnumbers the other in the four positions named). Five parents were purposively selected from among parents with students who are in the program. The names of the parents were obtained from the head teacher's office, they were all given letters of invitation to come and participate in the study. Other participant in the study included the District Education Officer and the Officer In-charge of the WFP, Dodoma office.

**Table 7: Number of study participants**

	# STUDENTS		# TEACHERS		# PARENTS	
PRIMARY SCHOOLS	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Chalula	7	4	3	2	3	2
Mvumi Makulu	5	5	3	3	4	2
Mvumi Mission	5	5	1	2	2	3
Chamwino	6	4	3	2	3	1
Uguzi	6	7	3	3	3	2
Mkapa	6	4	1	3	2	3
Nyerere	3	4	3	2	3	2
Kambarage	2	7	2	3	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>

Source: Data from the field

**Table 8: Parents' characteristics**

Level of Education			Occupation (sources of income)			
Some primary	Primary	Secondary	Peasant	Business	Mixed	other <sup>5</sup>
1	38	2	36	1	2	1

Source: From the field data

### **Research Instruments, Sources of Data and Procedures**

After I identified study participants and their characteristics, I designed different tools to enable me to collect data in the field (see section describing the tools below).

#### ***Document review***

At the first place, I reviewed documents that were related to school feeding program in Tanzania. I obtained documents from the WFP Dodoma office and at the office of the Chamwino District Education Officer. Documents reviewed included quarterly and yearly reports of school feeding

<sup>5</sup> This participant was a church leader.

program sent to WFP by the Chamwino District Education office, school progress reports compiled and sent by Head of Schools to Chamwino District Education Officer, and annual reports sent by WFP Dodoma office to the WFP Headquarters in Dar es Salaam.

The document review helped me to have background information of the school feeding program, statistics of schools covered by the program, number of students covered by the program, number of pupils in primary schools by gender, food ration criteria and its logistics and type of food. In the documents I was also interested to know level of performance of students before the program and after the program. I reviewed also school attendance registers to see attendance and enrollment trends of the students in the 3 years before and after the program.

### ***Invitation to the study***

According to the Tanzania's regulations, before going to the field to collect data, a researcher have to get permission letter from the Regional Government Authority allowing him/her to conduct the study in the region. I also asked for permission from the Regional Government of Dodoma to do my studies in the region by writing a letter with attached research clearance documents from UMass<sup>6</sup> to the Regional Administrative secretary who allowed me to do my studies for one month in the region (see annexes). Copies of the permission letters were also sent to the school heads that I identified for my studies asking them to give me cooperation while in their schools.

### ***Pre-field Visit and Meetings***

After obtaining permission to do my studies in Chamwino district, I planned to meet all 8 Head of schools that I identified for my studies plus two Division Executive Officers. I met all of them at identified schools. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce myself and explain the purpose of my study, the anticipated study participants and the criteria for selection in the study. This also helped me to have invitation letters sent early to the participants for them to get prepared for the study. A part from the fact that I was able to build relationship with the school

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<sup>6</sup> University of Massachusetts, Amherst



heads and government officials in these selected communities, the pre-field visit also helped me to estimate travel time from one school to the next as I had opportunity to observe and estimate the distance.

### **Research Tools and Procedures of Data Collection.**

#### ***Structures and Semi-structured Questionnaires***

Questionnaires are widely used tools by many researchers and evaluators of various programs (Gall, et al., 2003). The reasons for the use of the questionnaires varies from one another depending on the context and nature of information the researcher want to collect.

I used two types of the questionnaires to collect data. I used structured and Semi-Structured (sometimes I use the words open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires interchangeably but I mean the same thing). With the semi structured or open-ended questionnaires my intention was to allow participants to have choice of their answers and thus allow me to gain their varied perspectives, viewpoints and experiences (Gall et al., 2003). Some of the opened-ended questions wanted to understand their views on sustainability of the program, effect of the program on students enrollment and if they do send children to school just because there is food in schools or because of their value of education.

Questions in the semi-structured questionnaires were specific and made in a format of *yes* or *no* and some in multiple-choice questions. The multiple-choice questions used the Likert scale of four gauged levels (see annexes). All selected participants in the study were provided with questionnaires. I gave a guide on questions whenever they had difficulty to understand any question. The respondent took about 30 – 35 minutes to complete the questionnaires and return them to me. I met each group of parents, students and teachers independently and one after another. Questions were different from one group to the other. Some of the questions like gender, level of education, residence were similar to all questionnaires (see annexes).



**Figure 5: Some students filling in questionnaires during the study**

### *Informal conversation or informal Interviews*

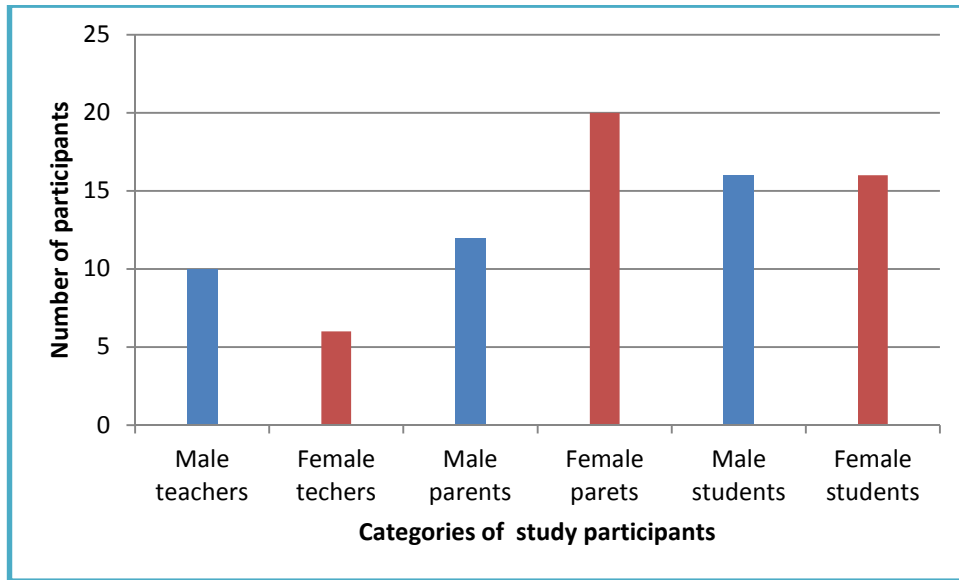
Because of what I was looking for from the participants – their perceptions, I had to informally engage with them through series of unstructured questions during the face-to-face interviews. This informal situation allowed me to be flexible enough on what questions to ask and when. I did not design specific questions to ask but I would reframe or set the new question according to the respondents' response. Through face-to-face interview, I interviewed four students (two male and two females), four parents and two teachers. Participants were picked randomly from among the participants. They were asked if they would be willing to be recorded. Questions focused on school feeding but differed from one group to the other. For example, parents were asked about the history of school feeding before independence and about what they think should be done after the end of the program under the WFP. Students were asked about the quality of food, satisfaction, what they think should be improved and the like while teachers were asked about challenges and what they also think should be improved and their opinions on WFP's exit strategy.

### ***Focus Group Discussions (FGD)***

Focus Group Discussion is a widely used methodology in social science researches as it helps to tap more in-depth perceptions, attitudes, experiences and belief of the study participants (Gretchen & Rallis, 2012). Since my study focus was to find the views or perceptions of the parents, teachers and students on contributions of the school-feeding program to students' enrollments and retention in primary schools, the use of FGD as a tool for data collection was very important for this study. Through the use of FGDs I was able to collect data that reflected the perceptions and or views of parents on the matter.

Two FGDs were conducted at two different areas within the selected study location. All selected participants for the focused study group had to meet at one location, which was considered convenient to all participants and with a good venue. In order to enable participants to talk freely and be able to give their insights and views on the school feeding program, I organized groups that were divided according to respondents' gender and occupations. Groups were of 32 parents (12 males and 20 females mixed), 16 teachers (10 males and 6 females mixed) and 32 students (16 male and 16 females having separate groups). I did this with the view that student females couldn't have free room to talk if they were to be mixed with male students. I mixed parents and teachers because I considered them as mature and they almost know each other as they came from same location, and thus reduced the possibility of one being fearful or feeling shy to give his/her opinion in the group. In all groups, I had to control the influence of others who might have dominated the discussions like the Head of Schools and Grade 7 students.

Both parents' and teachers' groups had three questions that they had to discuss and come up with the list of the agreed responses. Students had only two questions instead.



**Figure 6: Participants of the focus group discussion**

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, I did data analyses in two different stages. In the first stage, I worked first on the questionnaire data, raw data from the WFP and District education Officer's offices. Because the collected data through questionnaires were just simple and basic data, I used Microsoft excel to analyze them. The intention was:

- i. Determine level of scores from students who agree or disagree with the idea that school feeding program contributes to students enrollment and reduce dropout
- ii. Determine level of scores from parents who agree or disagree with the idea that school feeding program contributes to students enrollments and reduce dropout rate
- iii. Determine level of scores from teachers who agrees or disagree with the view that school feeding program increases students enrollment and reduces dropout rate.

Qualitatively, I also transcribed perceptions of parents, teachers and students that I collected through voice recorder and through videos. Some of the qualitative data that I also transcribed came from open-ended questionnaires. Open-ended questionnaires were used in

this study to give study participants more “room” to give their perceptions and/or opinion on the contribution of the school feeding programs to students’ enrollment and retention. Other qualitative data came also from the two focus group discussions that I conducted during the study. The focus group discussions were guided by the pre-set questions in relation to the focus of the study and to questions asked in the questionnaires. The aim was to cross-check the accuracy of the answers from both sides (the focus groups and the interviewees).

### **Data trustworthiness**

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), in researches and particularly in qualitative research, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure trustworthiness of the data collected. Among others, they suggest prolonged engagement, research memos, persistent observation, peer debriefing and triangulation as strategies to ensure trustworthiness.

To ensure trustworthiness in this study, I established a prolonged relationship with the government officials in Dodoma region and the WFP officials at the Headquarters in Tanzania . I started communicating them through phone calls and emails from the time of the proposal development and up to when I went to the field. I got the opportunity to explain my purpose of the study and the kind of assistance I may need from them during my times in the field. This enabled them to freely have me access relevant documents that I needed for this study.

Again, because triangulation demands that the researcher examine data from different perspectives in order to validate or deny some claims or ideas, I also examined data from focus group discussions, individual interviews and those from questionnaires to ensure that the themes and categories generated by each could be supporting or complementing each other.

## **Limitation and Delimitation of the study**

### ***Limitation of the study***

This study had the following limitations. One, the study was done in the rural areas and as such the results cannot be generalized in the other non-rural areas like school feeding in the urban or slum areas in developing countries.

Two, baseline data that would have helped to make judgment statistically if there are changes in students enrollment before and after the program intervention were not available. This made it difficult to statistically prove that there were significant changes or impacts of the school feeding program in relation to students' enrollment and retention.

Three, perceptions of the group participants on the program might have been influenced by culture – of worrying that if they say something negative to the program, the government or the WFP officials might decide to postpone the program. This applies to students' too who might have thought that, if they had said something negative on the program, teachers would have punished them.

Fourth, by the time I was doing this study, the government of Tanzania has already abolished school fees in all public primary schools. This might have affected the result by the fact that possibly students were more enrolled in the school because of the abolition of school fees in primary schools and not because of the school feeding program.

Last but not least, the resources and time available limited this study and therefore I had to do it in a small area and within a limited number of days. Limited resources therefore affected the time of being in the field, time of reviewing documents, interview and selection of the study participants. This might have affected the study results.

### ***Delimitation of the Study***

To ensure the reliability of the results of this study, I tried as much as to delimit some of the barriers or limitations of this study. One, I selected rural settings as my study area without mixing or involving it with school feedings in the slum urban areas. Two, all schools involved in the study were public schools and no private schools were involved in this study. Three, the selection of parents were purposefully made to involve only parents whose children are in the program or have been in the program. This was to make sure that I involved only those who clearly knew the program. Fourth, only school children of grades 3 to 7 who could read and write were involved in this study. This was to make sure that they could be able fill in the questionnaires and that they are also aware of the school feeding program.

### **Conclusion**

In this section, I have described the study area, reasons for the choice of the study area; sample size and how I chose the sample; data collection tools and how I used them to collect data; how data were analyzed; data trustworthiness, as well as the limitations and delimitation of the study. In the next section of this study I have reported the study findings and made discussions around the findings of the study.

## **SECTION FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

This study aimed at investigating the perceptions of the parents, students and teachers on the contributions of the school-feeding program to the students' enrollment and reduction of students' dropouts in the primary schools in Dodoma, Tanzania. Different approaches were used to plan, collect and analyze data and finally draw the conclusion of the study. The study was guided by the research questions that I set before going to the field. The research questions were:

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- v. How do parents, students and teachers view the contribution of school feeding to the increase of students' enrollment in primary schools?
- vi. How do parents, students and teachers view the school feeding on reducing students' dropout in primary schools?
- vii. What do parents, children and teachers perceive as the challenges of school feeding program in Chamwino district
- viii. What do parents and teachers perceive as the best ways to sustain the program?

This section is therefore presenting both quantitative and qualitative findings concurrently; meaning that, the statistical data are presented along with the qualitative data collected from the field. The findings are also presented concurrently with the discussions. There is no independent chapter or section in this study that deals with discussions alone. The presentation of findings and discussions all together at same time is meant to simplify the study and avoid confusions to the readers. Presentation of findings and discussions in this section are presented in a sequence of the research questions.



**Perceptions of the parents, students and teachers on the contribution of school feeding to the increase of students' enrollment in primary schools**

Issue of students' enrollments and dropouts in the primary schools and at other levels of education systems like secondary and higher learning institutions in Tanzania has been the main concern of the academics and the international organizations. Their main concern has been that, education is the key that would bring the poor out of poverty (Bernstain, J., 2007; Nyerere, J.K., 1967).

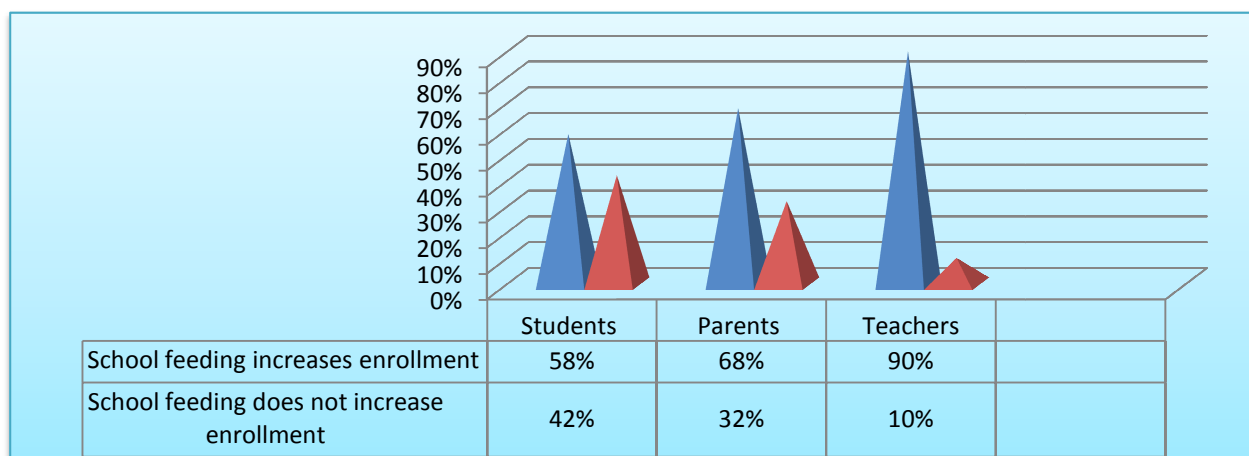
Using stakeholders' perception to test the strengths of the school feeding program on increasing students enrollment rate, I involved 40 parents; 80 students and 40 teachers in this study so that I could understand what they think on the school feeding program as the "factor" for students' enrollment in the primary schools.

On students' side, when asked informally and through structured questionnaires as to what they perceived as the contributions of the school-feeding program on students' enrollment, majority of them reported that, "school feeding program contributes to the students' enrollment in primary schools". For example, among eighty (80) students who were involved in the study, about fifty eight (58) percent of them said that school feeding helps in increasing students' enrollment while the rest forty two (42) percent did not agree that school feeding do increase students' enrollments.

When the same question was tested to parents, only 68 percent had the opinion that the school feeding contributes to students enrollment while the rest 32 percent had the opinion that school feeding does not contribute to students enrollment in primary schools (see figure 4).

Teachers had more homogenous opinions as compared to groups of parents and students on whether school feeding contributes to students' enrollment or not. For example, among 40 teachers who participated in the study, 89 percent of them had the opinion that school feeding program contributes to the students enrollment in schools and 11 percent did not agree that school feeding increases students enrollment. The 11 percent of the teachers who disagreed with the idea of school feeding program tells us that still there are negative views against school feeding program and that not all people would agree with the program.

In a general view, all respondents seemed to have the opinion that the "school feeding program contributes to students' enrollment". This finding reflects the arguments put forth by other researches like of (WFP, 2011; Ahmed, 2004; Omwami, 2011) who also found that school feedings contributes to students' school enrollment. Despite the fact that results from this study correspond to the findings of previous studies, still there are variation of opinions among the study participants in this study and across the group of participants. Therefore, still there are queries as to why teachers had very strong opinion that school-feeding programs contribute to students' enrollment as opposed to the other respondents, namely teachers and students?



**Figure 7: Respondents' opinions on the role of school feeding on increasing enrollments**

The respondents' different perspectives may explain this variation of opinions among parents, teachers and students. On one side, the explanation could be that, because teachers have been dealing with the students and with issues of students' enrolment even before the introduction of the school-feeding program, they might have experienced low or poor students enrollment before the program as compared to after the introduction of the program. If the enrolment rate increased statistically after the launch of the program, this may have influenced teachers' thoughts or opinions. On the other hand and with my personal experience in Tanzania, because parents do not have habit or culture of following school issues like number of students enrollment in schools (Hunt, F., 2008), it is very likely for them not to see the impact of the school feeding on students enrollment as they do not have 'comparative group' (previous enrollment rates statistics). The same explanation can apply to students' perspectives too.

**Perceptions of the parents, teachers and students on the ability of the school feeding program to reduce students' dropout and absenteeism in primary schools**

High students' dropout rate in Tanzania as well as in other developing countries is also a key preoccupation of many studies (Twaweza, 2011; URT, 2012). Studies indicate that, students dropout rate is higher among poor families or people of low income than the families with a higher income (Hunt, 2008). To address the problem of students' dropout, many suggestions and programs have been put in place and tried out by the academicians, researchers and policy makers. Among the options includes establishment of school-feeding programs in low resource contexts. This study was therefore geared towards investigating the perceptions of parents, teachers and students on the ability of the school feeding program to reduce students' dropout rate. Their perceptions or feelings towards the program would help to fill the gap of other

quantitative studies or researchers that have shown that school feeding helps to reduce students' dropout rate in the developing countries (Bundy et al., 2009; Jomaa et al., 2009; Omwami, et al., 2011).

To test their perceptions towards the contributions of the school feeding programs in addressing students' dropout in primary schools, participants (parents, students and teachers) were interrogated through open-ended questionnaires and closed questionnaires. Questions / statements were for example, "school feeding program has contributed to the reduction of students dropout rate in primary schools in Chamwino District – [and responses were] *strongly agree, Agree, disagree, not sure.*" Open-ended questions enabled the respondents to express their opinions as to what they think are the effects of school feeding program in addressing students' dropout rate in the district. Their opinions differed from one group to the other.

In their response to the study, parents had the opinion that, the school-feeding program contributes to addressing students' dropout in primary schools in the district. Parents who responded to this point were 40 and out of that, 63 percent of them expressed their opinion that school feeding helped to reduce students' dropout rates in the district. During the informal interview with parents, here is what one parent –male named as Kusenna had to say:

...before this program of giving children breakfast and lunch in schools, some of our children did not want to go to school. They would just hide in the forests near homes and come back home for lunch at noon, pretending as if they come from school while they are not. Nowadays, our children go to school and stay in the schools because they know that food is there at school and not at home again (Interview, July 2012).

Other parents too had the same opinion as of Mr Kusennah. For example, another parent named Mbeleje (a woman) who also had the same opinion told me that,

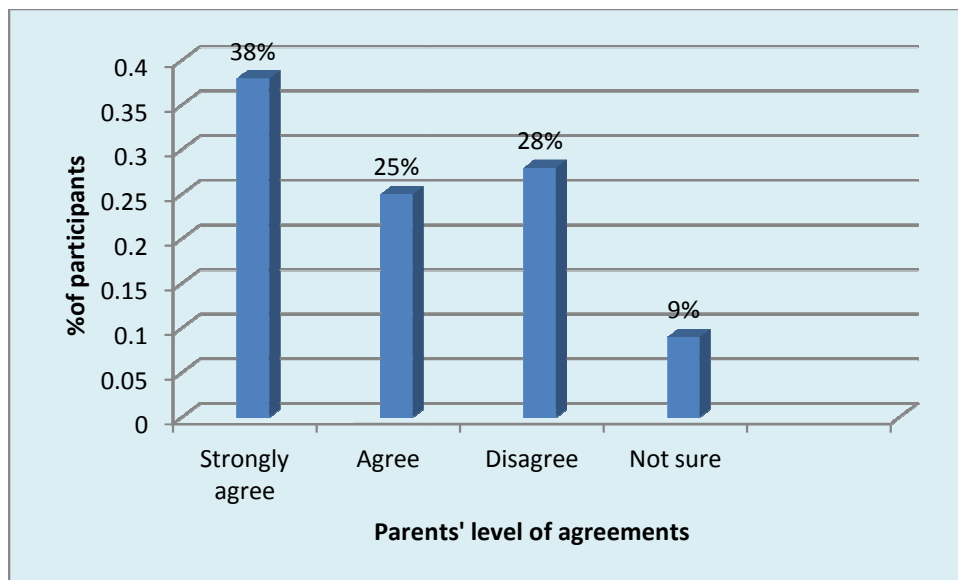
...you know, even me [the respondent] I dropped out of school because of distance from school and staying hungry at school. I was unable to stay longer in school hungry. During out times, we had to travel long distance to and from school. We had to carry food with us to school and if we couldn't do that, we had to stay hungry for the whole day until when we get back in the evening for dinner. Nowadays, because, students get food at school and because distance to and from schools are a bit reduced, most of them likes to go to school as opposed to our times....(Interview, July, 2013).

Some of the parents, who had different opinions, had the opinion that the reduction of students' dropout was not due to the presence of food at schools alone. They had the opinion that the removal of the school fees in all primary schools in the country contributed to the decrease of students' absenteeism because students have no reasons for not going to school as opposed to the past where parents had to pay school fees, which many of them were unable to pay.

For example, another woman named Mpegwa had the following to say:

...we parents nowadays know the importance of education. We know that, it is education that will be able to lift us from poverty and even my child knows that. For example, my daughter, used to tell me that she wanted to be a nurse. I therefore insisted her to go to school and do well to be a nurse. Because I and her knew the importance of education that we will have food if she succeeds and get employed, she went to school even at times when we did not have food at home and in school..."(Interview, July 2012).

These findings reflect the responses given by parents when they were asked to respond on a Likert scaled statement that required them to show the level of their agreement that school feeding motivated them to send their children to school. On a four level Likert-scale statement, only 38 percent strongly agreed that school-feeding program motivated them to send their children to school. The remaining 25 percent agreed, 28 percent disagreed and 9 percent were not sure ( see figure 5).

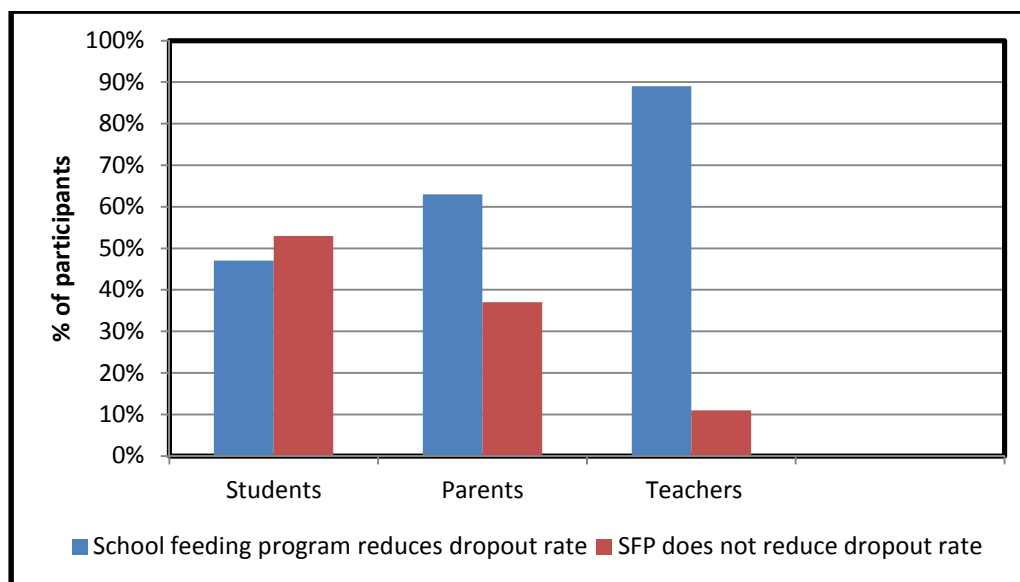


**Figure 8: Parents' agreement if school feeding program influenced them to enroll their children.**

**Source:** From the researcher's data

On the other hand, among 40 teachers who participated in the study, about 89 percent of them had strong opinions that, school feeding program helped to reduce students' dropout rate in the district.

While Parents and teachers had strong opinion that the school-feeding program reduces students' dropout rates, students who participate in the study (80 students), only 47 percent of them agreed that school feeding contributes to the reduction of absenteeism or dropout rate.



**Figure 9: Responses on the effectiveness of school feeding program in reducing dropouts**

**Source:** From the researcher's data

Students' opinion on the effectiveness of school feeding program to reduce dropout rate contradicts with the study findings by other researchers like (Omwami et al., 2011) in Kenya and Ahmed (2004) just to mention a few; which found that school feeding programs are effective in reducing students' dropout by increasing students' attendance rate.

The results here again are questionable as to why students' view differs from that of the parents and teachers. Why would they (students) see the program as not contributing to the reduction of students' dropout? There may be several explanations about this result. One explanation may be that students did not want to show the researcher that they are going to school because of the presence of food and not because of their personal willingness and value to education. This explanation may be valid based on the Africans culture where an individual or a person may not like to be marked or labeled as someone who is motivated to do and participate in an activity only if there is food (glutton or foodie). Being labeled like that, in African cultures, is shameful and may reduce someone's status in the society [this is based on my personal experience].

Another explanation for this result may be that, based on their age (7 – 13 years), students may not have background information or status of students' absenteeism and dropouts before the introduction of the school feeding program. Because of lack of background information, the students may thus see the situation as normal and that no significant changes on students' enrollment or reduced absenteeism. In addition to that, because of their age they may not pay much attention to issues like students' attendance and enrollments in school and how that relates to school feeding program.

Despite the fact that the above explanations shows why students might think that school feeding program have no significant effect on reducing students' dropouts in primary schools, still there is a need for further studies that would investigate their (students) basis of thought so as to justify the validity of those explanations and see if study confirms the same or not. The suggested study may go across gender; age and grades to see 'who' among students agree or disagree on "what" and "why".

In order for the researcher to explore more of students' perspectives, they (students) were asked if they think that provision of food in schools motivated them to get enrolled in Grade 1. In the questionnaire, students were required to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the question. Among 80 students who participated in the study, 52.3 percent of the students agreed that provision of food in schools motivated them to enroll in grade 1; the remaining 47.8 percent did not agree that food motivated them to enroll in schools. Although more than a half of the students agreed that provision of food in schools was a motivational factor for their enrollment in schools, still the margin between those who agreed and those who disagreed is very small. Several factors can try to explain or interpret this result.



One, it can be explained that, students' perception can be influenced by other motivational factors that can also be found in schools other food provision in schools. Factors other than foods that can also influence students' perceptions are like, peer groups (friendship) in schools, awareness to value of education, school learning environment and the like. Therefore, students may consider those as the motivational factors for school enrollment than provision of foods in schools. What I mean and that I want to emphasize here is that, students may disregard food provision in school as a motivational factor for their school enrollment after recognizing other motivational factors other than foods in schools.

Secondly, it can also be interpreted that, students' enrollment at grade1 may have been due to the influence and decision of the student's parent and not due to the demand of a student him/herself. This can be because of their little age at the time of school enrollment. So, it is hard for the students to tell now if their enrollment was due to their parents' influence or their personal wishes.

### **Perceptions of parents, teachers and students on the problems of the school-feeding program**

After a proper examination of the perceptions of the parents, teachers and students on the two areas above (contributions of the school-feeding program on students' enrollment and dropout in primary schools) I also investigated the perceptions of the study participants (parents, teachers and students) on what they perceive as the problems of the school feeding program.

Similarly, in order to investigate their perceptions on this area, I used open-ended questionnaires in order to give participants more room for expressing their opinions and feelings on the

program. The questionnaires' sessions were followed by the informal interviews (personal interviews) session with some study participants. Two interviewees (a male and a female) were randomly picked from each group of the study participants for in-depth questioning.

In a questionnaire, participants were asked to explain in brief, any problem they see in relation to the program and why they think it is a problem. Questions asked were the same to all respondents. Among all 160 participants (80 students, 40 parents and 40 teachers); about 70 percent of them responded to this question and the rest did not respond. However, their response to the question was not mandatory. This high rate of response – 70 percent – to the question indicated that participants might have experienced some problems with the school-feeding program in Chamwino District.

To analyze these data, I grouped problems into two groups – those that related to the *donors* (WFP in this study) and those that were related to the *recipients*. Donors were defined as program sponsors and the recipients were defined as beneficiaries namely parents, students, teachers and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training of the United Republic of Tanzania.



**Figure 10: A kitchen, firewood and plastic containers used by students to fetch water for cooking.**

During the analysis which involved grouping of the responses that were similar and rankings on the basis of the number of responses received on the same item, I found that most of the problems were on the recipients' side than to the donors' side (see Table 9 for the list of identified problems). However, some of the problems were unique to specific group (s) of the study participants and therefore could not fit to all groups. For example, some of the problems named by the teachers were not even similar to those identified by parents and students and the vice versa (see Table 9). Therefore, the section below tries to explain some of the key identified problems as reported by the respondents during the study.

**Table 9: Problems of schools feeding program as reported by the respondents**

DONORS (WFP)	RECIPIENTS			
	Parents	Teachers	Students	MoEVT
Supplying expired foods to schools	Unwilling to contribute money for milling purposes	Food not well cooked	Think much on food when it is close to breakfast and lunch time, thus not concentrate on studies	Lack of water for cooking and general cleanliness especially in summer
Small food rationing	Unwilling to cooperate in building school canteens	Not informing parents how monthly contributions for school feeding program are spent	Some students just going to school for food and not serious study	Teachers doing activities that are not part of their job description
Creating dependency to recipients	Inability to afford contributing Tshs. 1000.00 (US\$ 0.7) monthly.			Food in schools causing political conflicts
Teachers not included as the beneficiaries (getting food at school - they are neglected from the program)	Do not trust teachers on how their monthly contributions are spent			Sometimes students don't get food even if food is available in store
Food supplies delayed (in some cases)				Students fetching fuel wood in the forests for cooking at school
Sometimes, students drinking porridge without sugar				Students carrying water from home to school every day for cooking
Parents not informed about WFP's contribution and what parents should contribute and why.				Conflicts between parents and teachers on the use of money contributed by parents

Source: Researcher's data

### **Parents' responses on problems of school feeding program**

This study involved 40 parents, among them, 39 parents had children involved in school feeding program except one parent who had no child in the program during the study although she had one in the past year before the study. She therefore had experience with the school feeding program, and that made her qualify to participate in the study.

When parents were asked to inform or to pinpoint to the researcher as what they might consider as the problems with the school feeding program in their area, most of the parents' responses reflected or were concerned with administrative issues. Some of the problems named by the parents were either directed towards the WFP or the teachers. For example, some of the parents seemed to put more blames on the program as they termed it as another 'burden' to them in terms of costs. They defined it as another burden to them because, based on the program design, parents are required to Tanzanian shillings one thousand (equivalent to US\$ 0.7) every month. The contributions or fees are used to cover the costs of milling and paying for the salaries of the cooks and the security guards. Their claim was that "they have poor income, yet the government is introducing the idea of contributing one thousand Tanzanian shillings every month" that they claim not to be able to pay. For example, during the informal interview one parent said "...I have two children going to school, I am required to buy them school uniform, pens, shoes, and make sure that they eat at home, this is already too much for me and I may thus not be able to pay Tanzanian shillings 1000.00 as required every month to the Headmaster...". Many parents expressed their concern over the monthly payment by either saying that it is too much for them or they do not get information from the teachers as to how the money is spent. This indicates that parents did not trust teachers on how the contributed money is spent. This mistrust may be due to the reason that teachers' do not give sufficient feedback to the parents.

Parents were also concerned with the current modality that requires school children to bring fuel wood every week and water every day for cooking to school. Parents were not comfortable with this, and most of them said that, “it overburdened their children”. With the current plan, schoolchildren have to go to the forest every weekend to collect fuel wood and to the rivers to fetch water to bring to school for cooking needs.

Other parents’ concerns were the supply of expired food to school by the WFP. Parents expressed their feelings that they “are worried of the health of their children”. When parents were asked as to how did they know that food supplied is expired while they are not direct food consumers, they said that they “received reports from their children” who are the direct consumers of the food. Below a response as recorded from one of the parent named Madeje – a woman, from Chamwino district:

“...one day, my child who is in grade four, came back home claiming that she was not feeling comfortable with her stomach. I asked her what she ate on that day and she told me that she only ate food at school. She expressed to me that sometimes food at school are not well cooked or have expired. ...this is not a secret because most of the parents know this...” (Madeje, Interview, July 2013).

To verify the truth of the view that WFP do in some cases supply expired food in schools, I crosschecked it by looking at the responses given by the students in their questionnaires. In their responses, students also had the same view (opinion) that WFP in some cases, have been supplying expired food to schools especially beans and the maize flours. To this juncture, having two similar responses from parents and from the students, I say that parents, teachers and students see the supply of the expired food by the WFP as problem with the school-feeding program in the District and this needs to be crossed checked with the WFP officials in the region.

### **Teachers' responses on problems of school feeding program**

Response from 40 teachers who participated in the study did not differ a lot from the responses from the parents. For example, teachers mentioned the lack of water for cooking especially in summer or during the dry seasons, lack of school canteen for the students' use, poor cooperation by the parents in building school canteens and monthly contribution of money (the Tanzanian shillings 1000 per month, excluding holidays). Teachers also expressed concerns about increased workload on them due to the introduction of the program and students' lack of concentration and attention to lessons when it nears breakfast and lunch times. Teachers reported that, when it is around the time for breakfast or lunch, students' lacks concentrations in learning.

Among the problems mentioned by teachers, I further probed into the issue of teachers' workload to understand more on how school feeding increases workload to teachers? This idea took more of my attention because of two reasons; I never saw it anywhere in the literatures that I reviewed and two, I thought that this may demoralize teachers and that it may affect also level of teaching in the classrooms. I therefore engaged with teachers more deeply in personal interviews to understand why they perceive the program as increasing their workload. On increasing their workload, teachers had the opinion that school feeding takes more of their time because, when a teacher is on duty for example, he or she is required to look into all logistics like of ensuring the presence of enough water and fuel wood for cooking, cleanliness of the kitchen and making sure that all students get food. Some teachers also had the view that the school-feeding program makes them not to be in harmony or good relations with parents and some of the politicians in the district. While parents think that teachers are misusing the money contributed by the parents and food brought in schools by the WFP, politicians on the other hand considers teachers as causing chaos to "their voters".

I found also politics around school feeding as a big problem. Some of the opposition leaders were reported convincing or telling parents not to contribute anything to school as they told parents “donors are providing everything concerning school feeding program”. Opposition leaders were reported telling parents “there is no way a big nation like USA cannot be able to build kitchens and provide money for milling maize flours”. Parents therefore believed that donors had brought money to schools for building kitchens but teachers used the money for themselves. Because of the politics around school feeding program, it is therefore hard to say that parents are unable to pay the one thousand Tanzanian shillings because of income or because of the ongoing politics in the district. This result of politics around school feeding program concurs with the study done by WFP (2003) in countries like Botswana, Brazil, Cape Verde, Namibia, Swaziland and Paraguay where they reported that, in country like “Cape Verde, Paraguay and Swaziland...” politics around school feeding and low income among most of the parents resulted to ineffective program after the WFP’s withdrawal. This result of politics around school feeding program in the developing countries calls for another study that can investigate its cause, effect and suggest policy options to deal with these issues.

### **Students’ responses on the problems of the school feeding program**

The largest group of the participants in this study was students’ group that comprised 80 students from grades 1 to grades 7 from all eight schools. When asked as to what they think or see as the problems related to the school feeding program, students mentioned issues that related to teachers and the WFP.

Students’ main concerns were on food quantity and quality, water scarcity and their parents’ concerns on the contribution of one thousand Tanzanian shillings every month. For example, on



food quality, they expressed their opinion that, “WFP officials have tendency of supplying to schools the expired food and that they are worried of their future health”. About half of the students who responded expressed their concern on this issue. However, they reported that, the supply of expired food especially maize flour does not occur regularly but in some cases (they couldn’t remember as to how many times a year this happens). On quantity of the food, students had the opinion that the current food ration of 120 gm is not enough and that they would ask more of up to 150 grams rationing for maize flour for porridge and *ugali*.

On the other hand, most of the students reported that their parents refuse to give them money to bring to school as they are required by their teachers and as part of their contribution to school feeding program. They reported that they don’t feel comfortable as their teachers keep insisting them to go back and ask for money from their parents. They therefore saw this as a problem because some of them, especially students of Grades 6 and 7, who are a bit mature in terms of age, may know the income capacities of their parents. But culturally again, in African contexts, it is unethical or misbehavior to keep asking something from your elder that already he/she has told you that he/she does not have [my personal experience].

### **Continuity of the Program**

#### **Perceptions parents, teachers and students on program’s continuation**

Despite the fact that students mentioned scarcity of water for cooking (especially in summer), food quality and quantity, monthly fees contributed by their parents to schools and bringing fuel-wood to schools as the problems with the program, still a good number of the students had the view that school feeding is important for them. For example, when students were asked if they

would want the program to continue or to be discontinued, about 98 percent responded that the program should continue (see Table 12).

**Table 10: Should the schools feeding program continue?**

RESPONDENTS	TOTAL	AGREE	DISAGREE
<b>Parents</b>	40	86%	14%
<b>Teachers</b>	40	74%	26%
<b>Students</b>	80	98%	2%

Source: From the field data

The rate of the responses by the students still shows or validates the view that, “students still value the school feeding program” and thus what needs to be taken care of are the corrective measures for the identified problems as mentioned by the parents, teachers and the students.

The researcher took further steps to verify the level of acceptance of the program despite the mentioned problems by the participants. I thought that this helped me to catch their perceptions as well, other than just being sidelined by problems.

In order to be able to investigate the level of program’s acceptance by its key stakeholders (primary beneficiaries), I posed questions through open and closed questionnaires. In closed questions, respondents were required to respond by saying *yes* or *no* on whether they need or don’t need the program to continue. For those who said *yes* to the question, they had to answer the open-ended question by explaining *why* they need the program. Again here, the open ended questionnaires were meant to give them (respondents) more rooms to justify their perceptions or reasons as to why they would still need the program despite the fact that they said it had

problems. To elaborate this more, the next section shows how respondents responded to the question on whether they need the school feeding program to continue or not and why.

### ***Students' perception on program continuation***

When students were asked as to why they think that school feeding is important to them, they were able to mention some reasons why they think it is important. Some of the reasons mentioned by the students were that, school feeding gives them more energy to participate in school activities like footballs (for boys) and netballs (for girls), enables them to understand teachers and lessons much better than if they are hungry, their health gets improved, and that they get more time to concentrate on learning than going back for lunch then back to school in the afternoon. These responses by the students correspond with other study findings in previous empirical studies like by Acham et al., (2012). For example, in their (Acham et al., 2012) study found that, school feeding contributes to improving students' health (weight and height), increase students' level of attention and concentration in the class and reduces short term hunger to students.

In informal or personal interviews, students had the view that school feeding should continue because "it is helping them to effectively understand lessons in the classroom". They were also worried that, if the program gets discontinued, they "may go hungry again to school" as they thought that some of them "might not get food/lunch at home".

Among all 80 students who participated in the study, when they were asked if they think school feeding program should be discontinued or continued, 98 percent of them responded that, the program should be continued.

### *Parents' perception on program continuation*

Apart from what I can define as positive responses from teachers on school feeding program, parents also showed that despite the problems embedded in the program, they still need it. About 86 percent of the parents strongly agreed that school feeding should continue and the rest had different views. Some of the reasons mentioned by the parents as to why they might still need the program included the reasons that “school feeding helps them reduce household expenditures; it enables them use less efforts to make their children go to school; parents gets more time to work on their farms (*shamba*); it helps parents reduces stress from thinking on lunch for their schoolchildren and it reduces the number of street children business vendors”.

Apart from the use of the questionnaires, I had the informal interviews with parents too on why they think they still need school feeding program while they have reported that it has problems and even to the extent that some labeled it as “another burden” to them? In personal interviews, parents expressed their opinion that they still need school feeding because it makes their children go to school and learn effectively. One woman named Sechele in the personal interview informed me that she wouldn't like the program to phase out because the program assures them with lunch for their children and they therefore get more time to engage in farms or other activities that would help them earn more income. Here is what she said,

...we parents need the program to continue because it assures us that our children will have lunch at school and therefore we don't get worried of their lunch. [School feeding] program enables us to get more time and continue work on our *shambas* (farms) than coming back early to prepare food for our children (Sechele: Interview, July, 2012).

### *Teachers' perception on program continuation*

Teachers too had the same opinions that despite the fact that, the program is facing several challenges, still it is more important for students learning. For example, among all 40 parents who responded, about 74 percent strongly agreed that they would still need the program to be continued.

The reasons given by the teachers did not greatly differ to those of the students and parents. On their side, teachers reported that, they still need the program because it helps students to effectively concentrate on learning and in school activities outside of the classroom; it enables teachers to cover syllabus as required because of the attendance of students – the program leads to less absentees (this reduced the need for teachers to repeat the previous lessons); students' performance rate increases; students becomes happy in the class during the lessons and the rate of sick children decreases. They also reported that the provision of food in school helps orphans who are going to schools be able to get food (lunch and breakfast), helps create employments for the cooks and security guards, and that it also help students to get more time for their private studies because they have more time in school than if they go home for lunch and then back to school.

Based on these results, coupled with the responses from students, teachers and parents, I can strongly argue that, despite the fact that school feeding program is still facing some problems, it is still an important program for students' learning in the developing countries like Tanzania.

### **Perceptions of Parents and Teachers on the Sustainability of the Program**

As I have stated in the literature reviews' section, the meaning of the word "sustainability" is still contested and complex (Scoones, 2007). However, for the sake of this thesis, sustainability means 'ability to continue' and therefore sustainability of the school feeding program means the ability of the school-feeding program to continue even after the withdrawal of the funders – who are WFP in this study.

My interests on sustainability of the school-feeding program were derived by the fact that the current sponsor (WFP) will not run the program endlessly, and that the students will still need food for schooling. My intention was therefore to investigate the views of the parents and teachers on school feeding program's sustainability. I wanted to understand what they say as the best approach to make the program sustainable and beneficial to schoolchildren. In this part of the study, I did not involve students because of their age and possibly their ability to make decision on complex issues of program's sustainability (Scoones, 2007).

A total of thirty five (35) participants (21 parents and 14 teachers) were involved in this part of the study through five different focus group discussions. The focus groups were guided by questions and ideas that were pre-set by the researcher.

**Table 11: Composition of the participants of the focus group discussion**

PARENTS' GROUPS						TEACHERS' GROUPS				TOTAL # OF PARTICIP ANTS
1 <sup>st</sup> grp		2 <sup>nd</sup> grp		3 <sup>rd</sup> grp		1 <sup>st</sup> grp		2 <sup>nd</sup> grp		
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	

3	4	4	3	3	4	3		4	4	3	<b>35</b>
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Source: Field data by the researcher

In the five focus groups that were made of seven participants each (see Table 11), participants were asked to discuss what would be their suggestions to enable the school feeding program to continue even at the absence of the external funding or donors. Their discussions were set around five main issues: the government to wholly finance the program; parents to share the running cost with the government; parents to contribute food to school; the schools to run the program by establishing school gardens, and new and the current donors to be asked to continue funding the program. During the discussion, where each group discussed all alternatives independently, participants were exposed to threats or barriers of each of the alternative so that they would deeply dwell into discussion while they are aware of the strengths and weakness of each of the ideas. After their discussions and agreements, all groups came together with their priorities ranked at levels 1 to 5 (highly ranked to least ranked – the higher the number the idea had, the least it was preferred by the participants). Points for each of the idea, from all five groups were added together. The idea that got the higher points meant the least preferred idea while one with low points was considered as the preferred or the best alternative to ensure the program's sustainability.

After the job of rankings and additions, the highly preferred alternative chosen by the participants was that government should wholly finance the program. This idea ranked first among all five alternatives voted by twelve participants (4 parents and 8 teachers). The second chosen idea was that the government should look for other donors in case WFP quits. Eight participants voted for the second alternative (3 parents and 5 teachers). Other ideas voted for as ranked from third to fifth were: parents to share the cost with the government (7 votes), parents

to contribute food to school (5 votes) and establishment of school gardens (3 votes), (see Table 12).

**Table 12: Voting matrix for the alternatives of the school feeding program**

Alternatives	Teachers		Parents		Total	Total	Rank
	Votes (a)	Rank (b)	Votes (c)	Rank (d)	Votes (a +c)	points (b+d)	
1. Find another sponsor	3	2.5	5	2	8	4.5	2
2. Parents to contribute foods to school	2	4.5	3	3	5	7.5	4
3. Government to wholly fund the program	4	1	8	1	12	2	1
4. Parents to share the costs with the government	3	2.5	4	4	7	6.5	3
5. Schools to establish school gardens	2	4.5	1	5	3	9.5	5

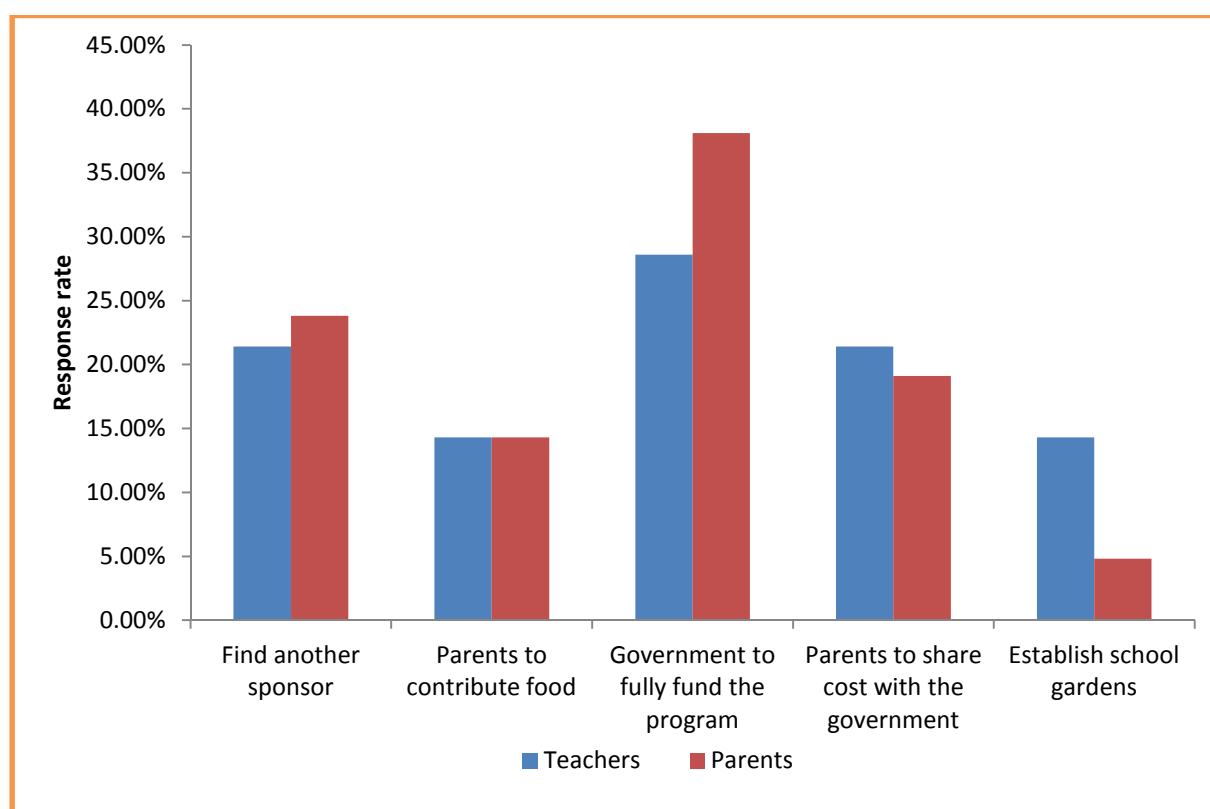
Source: From field data by the researcher.

The results are very interesting with the fact that participants' preferences reflected the WFP's proposal that suggests the governments to fully finance the school feeding program after the WFP's exit (WFP, 2003; Bundy et al., 2009). This idea was highly voted in both groups of parents and teachers. Possible explanations for their preferences might be that parents and teachers assume that the government has the capacity to provide food to all school going children. The other assumption might be that, parents and teachers assume that it is the



responsibility of the government to pay for all educational responsibilities, including school food. This is reflected even in their second votes where they still suggested that the government look for other sponsors in the event that the WFP exits or withdraws from the program.

Based on these results, parents and teachers do not understand that they need to get involved in the program's sustainability. Parents voted lowly for the alternatives that seemed to want them get involved in the program's sustainability. For example, teachers did not vote for the idea of establishing school gardens by awarding it zero (0) vote while parents awarded it two (2) votes. Parents also were negative to the idea that suggested that they (the parents) contribute food to school or share the cost with the government.



**Figure 11: Teachers and Parents' preferences over other forms of the school feeding program.**

When parents were asked as to why they voted against the idea that suggests the parents to contribute food or cash to school, they gave basically two reasons: one, that they are not sure of sustainability of weather (climatic change) as they thought this might affect their farm outputs negatively; two, they did not trust teachers – they believed that teachers may misuse food or cash contributed by parents to schools.

On the other side, when teachers were asked during the informal interviews as why they don't like school gardens as a way of ensuring sustainability for the school feeding program, they said that they don't have agricultural experts and also that it will require them to use more of their time in the school gardens. One teacher commented “school gardens require watering and we don't have water storage tanks, security during the night against outsiders who may want to thief from our gardens. It will therefore consume students time and our [teachers'] times too”. The idea of time reflects the comments by Bundy et al., (2009) who defines establishment of school garden as exploitation, as he comments: “expecting children and teachers to grow food on a production scale is exploitative and inappropriate use of the education system” (Bundy et al., 2009, p.48). However, Bundy's et al., (2009) comment is refuted or criticized by other researchers like Andrews (2011) who found the idea of school gardens working well with the school systems in developing countries. They recommend the use of school gardening as the best way of ensuring sustainability for school feeding program in the low-resources and fragile contexts where the governments' budgets are limited to fully sponsor the program. This debate therefore calls for further studies on which approach works best in low-resource contexts; i.e., which school feeding program will not be affected by the governments' lack of resources or limited budget.

## **SECTION FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **Summary of the Findings**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of parents, teachers and students on the contribution of school feeding programs to students' enrollment and retention. Chamwino District in Dodoma, Tanzania was used as a case study for this research thesis. Use of a mixed methods and different tools and techniques to collect data unveiled the effectiveness of the study and enabled me to uncover the perceptions of parents, teachers and students on school feeding programs that were not brought up by previous studies on school feeding programs.

The results from this study indicates that the parents, teachers and students have strong opinions on the effectiveness of school feeding programs' effect in reducing absenteeism and on increasing students' enrollment rates. Other than the fact that school-feeding program helps in reducing students dropout and increasing students enrollment; parents, teachers and even students still believe that school feeding has other advantages to students. For example, they believe that school feeding improves students' health, increases students' attention span in the class, reduces short-term hunger for students, and increases students' happiness at schools.

Though the case study was a school meal model and not take-home ration model, findings still show that parents have indirect benefit from the school-feeding program. For example, the results show that parents have reported that school feeding helps them to reduce households' budget expenditure on food and that they also get more time to work on their farms as they are sure that lunch will be provided for their children during the school days.

On the other hand, the study also shows that teachers have indirect benefits from the school feeding program as the program enables them to cover their syllabus as planned. This is because

students are able to come to school regularly, on time, and that there is less absenteeism due to sickness. Teachers also indicated that, school feeding makes students more attentive and effective learners, improves students' performance and their health.

Despite the fact that parents, students and teachers have expressed positive perceptions and views on school feeding program, they also pointed out some of the problems of the program.

On the question of the sustainability of the program, parents and teachers' views are that the government should finance the program after the withdrawal of the donor (WFP). They further suggest that, in the event the government cannot finance the school feeding program, parents can share the cost with the government by letting the parents to contribute food to schools. On the other side, the study shows that teachers are skeptical on establishment of school gardens as they think this might consume more of their time and students' time too. While teachers are skeptical on establishing school gardens, parents on the other hand seems not to agree with the idea of contributing cash instead of food to school in the event that the current sponsor withdraws.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the responses from parents, teachers and students on the problems facing the school feeding program, I can strongly state that implementation of the school feeding program in a low-resource contexts is still facing a lot of challenges and problems. Rural schools and even some of the urban schools based in slums do not have kitchens or school canteens that children can use for their meals. Students were found eating while seated on the grass or under trees. This raises the status of the hygienic component of the school-feeding program in developing countries. It calls for the attention for both donors and the government to improve the current

poor hygienic environments in schools in both where foods are provided and where it is not provided.

The question of the shortage or lack of clean water in the rural areas is still a big problem too. Because of shortage or lack of water, some schools were unable to get food cooked for students. Although WFP is trying to build water storage tanks in some of the schools as noted in Dodoma region, the pace of construction is very slow. For example, I realized that, in some cases, students had to go hungry because of lack of water for cooking although food was available in the schools. I would recommend construction of wells and building water storage tanks especially for the schools located in the rural areas. Studies show that construction of wells and water storage tanks seems to be much cheaper and sustainable than water taps that would require electricity for pumping.

The other issue of concern on the problems of the school feeding program is the question of parents being unwilling to contribute or cooperate in building school kitchens or contributing monthly fee of one thousand Tanzanian shillings to the School Head teachers. I can translate this into two perspectives. One, it may be due to the fact that it is politically motivated and two, it may be due to the poor level of income of many parents in the region. Leaders of the opposition of the political parties were reported by both parents and teachers to have influenced parents not to contribute whatever parents may be required to contribute towards the success of the program with the view that “donors are supposed to provide everything to the project”. Because many parents seem not to be well informed about role of the donors in the project, parents may buy the thoughts of the leaders of the opposition parties and thus prevent the success of the program. As I have recommended, the role of the opposing political parties to encourage poor cooperation of the parents in school feeding program still needs more investigations, but it also calls for the

need to engage stakeholders including political oppositions before, during and even after the program implementation. My belief is that, if stakeholders are fully engaged and well informed on the roles of the donors and the roles of parents, it may be hard for the leaders of the oppositions to come and convince parents otherwise. This too would be the best approach of building mutual trust between parents and the teachers for the better success of the program.

The question of sustainability of the school feeding program was another area of concern in this study. Despite the fact that many parents and teachers wished the continuation of the program, they did not need the program to be continually funded by the donors. Some of the parents expressed their worries on the sustainability of the project if donors withdraw. Various options were suggested by the parents as alternatives to not to depend on donor funding. For example, parents and teachers suggested that, “they will be willing to contribute a certain amount of food” (as it may be determined by experts) and not cash at the beginning of every school calendar. Some suggested the idea of establishing school farms and gardens that would be used for both as a source of school income and for food production. In school farms, students will also be able to practice modern ways of agriculture that may on the other hand make them modern farmers. However, this idea of school farms and gardens still requires in-depth studies and analysis of how it can be done by integrating it into school curriculum.

WFP’s evaluation report on exit strategies highlights the importance of the community involvement for successful program sustainability (WFP, 2003). In their report, they categorically emphasized “the most successful exit strategies are ones which is developed in coordination with the implementing partners, beneficiaries and relevant government authorities” (WFP, 2003, p.3). The document outlines six key components that are crucial for a successful and sustainable school-feeding program as the setting of milestone for achievement; government

commitment; community contribution; technical support; management and communication and involvement of the private sector (WFP, 2003). Despite all these suggestions given by the respondents and by WFP's the Exit Strategy Plan of 2003, still I recommend that the government of Tanzania through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in collaboration with the WFP, should send some of its officials to countries like Brazil and Namibia where the exit strategies, as was done by the WFP, has been reported successful (WFP, 2003). While there, they may be able to learn how those countries successfully managed to implement school feeding without donor dependency – and consider whether these policy options and strategies could be transferred to Tanzania.

However, still there is a need for policy studies that would come up with cost - effective models that may enable countries like Tanzania and other developing countries to effectively implement school feeding programs without depending on donors.

The current proposed exit strategy by the WFP, I can say, may still require low-resourced countries like Tanzania to ask for more funding from donors so that they can run the school feeding program. The suggested exit strategy by the WFP (2003) seems to be expensive in terms of its food procurement and distribution, trainings and workshops to the staff, staff employments and the like. This to my opinion, will still make developing countries dependent to the developed countries. Remember, it is these same countries that its educational reports show that school infrastructures, teaching and learning resources and general learning environments are either poor or not accessible to many school-age children. I would therefore recommend a model that may come up with the approach of how the school feeding program in poor countries like Tanzania can be either completely run by the community (Community run school feeding program model) or with very little funding from the governments that may not require them to

ask for more funding from the donors. Based on the economy, culture, values and traditions of most of the African countries like Tanzania where social relations are still strong and where majority are farmers or peasants, I believe that community-driven school feeding programs can still work and would be of beneficial to many poor families in Tanzania. The community-driven school-feeding program will benefit the poor in the sense that on one hand it will be as a source of income and on the other hand will make the poor food-secure. Furthermore, community-based school-feeding programs will also complement the national development programs for poverty reduction strategies that are currently implemented by many developing countries including Tanzania.

Besides the positive perceptions of parents, teachers and students to the school feeding program, the study still found that there are politics around school feeding programs which is also supported by studies done by the WFP (2003) in countries like Namibia, Paraguay and Cape Verde, just to mention a few. I would recommend two actions for this situation. One, WFP should, during the planning stages incorporate parents whose children are the “to be” beneficiaries. Parents must be well informed and be aware of their roles - what they are supposed to contribute for the success of the project. There should be an agreement with the parents on this to avoid future misunderstandings during the implantation phase. Two, the partnered governments should clearly and openly inform the leaders of the political parties – both ruling and opposition – on the nature of the program and all program conditions. This should be done by the government and not the by WFP officials to enable them (WFP staff) avoid being trapped in the country’s political affairs.



Another area that requires further studies as I commented in previous sections of this study is looking at why students' perception on the effectiveness of school feeding program in reducing students' dropout or absenteeism differs to that of parents and teachers.

### **Conclusion**

Although this study indicates that parents, teachers and students generally have positive perceptions towards school feeding program on increasing students' enrollment and retention (reducing students' dropout rate); still, care and attention should be taken to address some of the challenges towards meeting the program goals and objectives. Issues of program sustainability, hygiene, and politics around the program are some of the components that need to be well thought and be addressed.

Because the major aim of the school-feeding program is to enable students enroll and consistently stay in schools until they finish primary school; extra efforts to make sure that they get quality education while they are in schools are also very crucial. To this point therefore, the following issues should also be dealt with in parallel to supplying food in schools for students:

- Ensure universal coverage in primary education including for poor and underserved population in both rural areas and urban slums.
- Governments to increase domestic spending on education to at least 10 - 15 percent of the national budgets.
- Continue to abolishing school fees to enable low income families to send their children to schools
- Ensure adequate and quality teaching and learning materials in primary schools and continue training more teachers and to continue providing in-service programs for those who are already in the profession.



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## ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: STUDY PARTICIPANTS ORGANISED BY GROUPS

	Interviewees	TOTAL	REMARKS
1.	Parents	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All parents had schoolchildren who were/had been in the school feeding program</li> <li>- Five parents from each school, at least 3 females and two males</li> <li>- Identified by School Head teachers in collaboration with the researcher</li> </ul>
2.	Students	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 40 males and 40 females from grades 3 – 7</li> <li>- At least 10 students from each school</li> <li>- Must be able to write and read</li> </ul>
3.	Teachers	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Five teachers from each school</li> <li>- Included Head teacher, academic master, School feeding program coordinator, and two other teachers (gender of the two other teachers depends on which gender dominates the previous positions)</li> </ul>
4.	Chamwino District Education Officer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consulted for educational statistics and permission to allow teachers to participate in the study</li> </ul>
5	Ward Executive Officers	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consulted for statistical purposes and permission to allow teachers in their area to participate in the study</li> </ul>
	WFP	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consulted to collect statistics regarding the program</li> </ul>
	<b>TOTAL # OF PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>166</b>	



## ANNEX 2: WORK PLAN

This was the schedule that I used to help me collect data in the field. The whole process took me 23 working days and eight (8) weekends, in total 31 days as shown in the table below:

S/N	ACTION	DATE	PLACE	ACTIVITIES
1.	Pre-field visit	1 <sup>st</sup> week, July 2012  <b>(5 Working Days)</b>	Dodoma, Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings with Head teachers, Regional and District education officials of sampled schools</li> <li>- Identify schools and parents to be included in the study</li> <li>- Discuss with Head teachers on parents and students to be involved in the study</li> <li>- Arrange venues and schedule meeting hours for the study</li> <li>- Meeting with WFP Officials in Dodoma</li> <li>- Observe school feeding program in 4 primary schools</li> <li>- Hire RA and explain to him what will be his duties and purpose of research</li> </ul>
2.	Document Review	2 <sup>nd</sup> Week, July, 2012  <b>(7 Working Days)</b>	Dodoma, Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review WFP reports</li> <li>- Review students' attendance and retention reports before the start of the program</li> <li>- Review students attendance and level of retention reports after and during the program</li> </ul>
3.	Data Collection	3 <sup>rd</sup> Week, July 2012  <b>(6 Working Days)</b>	Dodoma,Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct interviews (face to face ) for 20 teachers for 2 days in 4 schools, 5 teachers from each school</li> <li>- Conduct interviews with 5 parents whose students are currently in the program and 5 parents whose children had been in the program</li> <li>- Conduct interview with 12 pupils (6 males and 6 females), 3 from each school; of different grades and sex</li> </ul>

5.	Data Collection	4 <sup>th</sup> Week, July 2012 ( <b>5 Working Days</b> )	Dodoma,Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administer questionnaires to all 20 teachers, 80 students, 30 parents, 10 education officers</li> <li>- Conduct focus group discussions with 50 people (16 parents, 12 teachers, 22 students)</li> <li>- Collect questionnaires</li> </ul>
6.	Report writing	September – December, 2012	Umass, USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further literature review</li> <li>- Data analysis</li> </ul>
7.	Report writing	January - May 2013	Umass, USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report writing and submission</li> </ul>

### ANNEX 3: MINI RESEARCH BUDGET

S/N	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	Total cost
1.	Air Fare – Kigoma – Dar - Kigoma	Trip	300.00	300.00
2.	Bus fare( Dar – Dodoma - Dar)	Trip		60.00
5.	Lodging 26 nights (Dodoma)	Night	60.00	1,560.00
7.	Lodging 2 nights (Dar es Salaam)	Night	60.00	120.00
8.	Per diem 28 days (Dar and Dodoma)	Night	52.00	1,456.00
9.	Stationeries (e.g. marker pens, rim papers, printing, photocopying)	Package	200.00	200.00
11.	Digital camera/voice recorder	package	250.00	250.00
13.	Field transport (Taxi)	20 Days	40.00	800.00
14.	Lunch for participants (focus group)	60 People	6.00	360.00
16.	Research assistant (Lodging & per diem)	20 days	45.00	900.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>6,006.00</b>

## **ANNEX 4: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**University of Massachusetts**

**Informed Consent Part I:**

### **RESEARCH DESCRIPTION**

Research Description: You are invited to participate in a research study that is assessing the role of school feeding program in increasing students' enrolment and retention in schools in Tanzania. The study is done in the district of Chamwino in Dodoma region.

I am interested in working with you during my study so that I will be able to gain a better understanding on what you think and what you know about the role of the school feeding program in schools particularly its role in increasing students enrollment and the degree at which the school feeding makes students stay in schools consistently (retention) until they graduate.

Once you agree to participate in this study, I will ask you to commit your time and work together with me for a few hours over the next two weeks. We will work together to decide when you are available to share your experience and perspective. I am interested in your experiences and what you have to say. Your participation in this study will allow for your contribution as educational stakeholder to be shared with the larger educational community.

Risks and Benefits: Although all studies have some degree of risk, the potential in this investigation is quite minimal. If at any time, you feel you do not want to answer a question – you don't have to. You are also welcome to discuss any concerns you have with me along the way and withdraw from the study at any time. The benefits of being in the study are the chance to have your opinions heard, and your experiences documented to possibly influence policy creation, planning and decision making approaches in the future.

Payments: Your participation in this study will not involve any form of payment.

Data Storage and Confidentiality: In order to ensure data confidentiality, I will not use your name in this study. Each subject will choose with the researcher a code name, which will be used throughout the research. There will be no identifying information about you. In addition, all the field notes and transcriptions from the audiotapes will be stored securely in my house. The data collected will be used for a course project and possibly in presentations and publications.

Time Involvement: Your participation will take a few hours or less over the next several weeks.

How Will Results Be Used: The results of this study may be used in any or all of the following ways: at conferences, presented at meetings, published in journals, articles or in book form.

## ANNEX 5: PARTICIPANT'S ASSENT FORM.

University of Massachusetts

### ASSENT FORM

I \_\_\_\_\_ (your name) agree to participate in the study entitled FEEDING STUDENTS? EXAMINING VIEWS OF PARENTS, STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ON THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM'S SCHOOL FEEDING INITIATIVES IN CHAMWINO DISTRICT IN TANZANIA.

Benjamin Ngaji Oganga has explained to me why he is doing this study and I understand what is being asked of me. If I have any questions, I know that I can contact Benjamin Oganga at any time. I also understand that I can leave the study any time I want to.

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Investigator's Verification of Explanation*

I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to \_\_\_\_\_ . S/he has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all of her/his questions and s/he provided the affirmative agreement (i.e., assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ANNEX 6: PARTICIPANT'S INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**University of Massachusetts**

**Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects**

**Informed Consent Part II:**

### **PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS**

Principal Investigator: **BENJAMIN NGAJI OGANGA**

Research Title: **Feeding Students? Examining Views of Parents, Students and Teachers on the World Food Program's School Feeding Initiatives in Chamwino District in Tanzania.**

- I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My participation in research is voluntary and without financial compensation. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. His email is [boganga@educ.umass.edu](mailto:boganga@educ.umass.edu)
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the University of Massachusetts School Of Education Institutional Review Board/IRB. I can reach the IRB by calling (+1 413) 545-1056 or I can write to the School of Education, University of Massachusetts, 813 North Pleasant Street, Amherst, Massachusetts 01003.

- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.
- If video and/or audio taping is part of this research, I ( ) consent to be audio/video taped. I ( ) do NOT consent to being video/audio taped.
- Written, video and/or audio taped materials ( ) may be viewed in an educational setting outside the research, ( ) may NOT be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.
- **My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.**

Participants signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNEX 7: QUESTIONNAIRES

Note that, the questionnaires used in the field to collect data were made in Kiswahili language which is the spoken language and a National language of the study participants. These attached here are samples with my translations from Kiswahili into English. They give a reflection on what kind of data I collected from the field.

### 1. Sample questionnaire for parents

1. Sex.... Male.....female...
2. Age.....
3. Name of the village.....
4. Ward.....division.....district.....
5. Level of education.....
6. Sources of income.... **(tick all that apply)** ...farmer...../ mixed (farmer& pastoralist)..... / business.....others (specify).....
7. Are you aware of school feeding program? (tick one).... Yes.../ no....
8. Do you have a child in school feeding program? **(tick one)** yes.... /no...if yes, how many are they?.....
9. How do you rate the quality of the school feeding program? **(tick one)** poor.../average.../more than average.../excellent....



10. In your opinion, do you think that school feeding program contributed to the enrollment of your child (ren) in school?
- i. Strongly agree
  - ii. Agree
  - iii. Not at all
  - iv. Not sure
11. To what extent do you think school feeding program contributes to students' enrollment in schools?
- i. Extremely contributes
  - ii. On average
  - iii. Does not contribute
  - iv. Not sure
12. Do you think school feeding program helps in reducing students' dropout?
- i. Extremely contributes
  - ii. On average
  - iii. Does not contribute
  - iv. Not sure
13. Do you think that parents whose children are under school feeding program benefit from the program? (tick one) yes.... / no... if yes explain how.....
14. Are there any problems that you can see under this program?  
Explain.....

## **2. Sample Questionnaire for Teachers**

1. Name of the school.....
2. Sex.... **(tick one)** male.../female...
3. Age.....
4. Name of the village.....
5. Ward.....division.....district.....
6. Level of your education.....
7. Are you aware of school feeding program? **(tick one)**.... Yes.../ no....
8. What type of foods do students eat in school? Name them.....
9. Are food varieties for students changed regularly? **(tick one)** yes.../ no...
10. How do you rate school feeding program? **(tick one)** poor.../average.../more than average.../excellent....
11. To what extent do you think school feeding program contributes to students' enrollment in schools? **(tick one)**
12. Extremely contributes
13. On average
14. Not at all
15. Not sure
16. Do you think school feeding program helps in reducing students' dropout? **(tick one)**
17. Extremely contributes
18. On average
19. Not at all
20. Not sure
21. As a teacher, are fully involved in the school feeding program in your school? **(tick one)** yes/no
22. If your answer is yes, explain how you are involved.....  
.....
23. If your answer is no in question 14, explain why.....  
.....
24. Do you like the program to continue after the end of the World Food Program time? **(tick one)** yes.../no...
25. Are there other benefits other the school feeding program other than on students' enrollment and dropouts? **(tick one)** yes.../no.... If yes, explain.....  
.....
26. Are there any problems that you can see under this (school feeding program) program? If yes, explain.....  
.....

### 3. Sample questionnaire for Students

1. Name of the school.....
2. Sex.... (**tick one**) male...../female.....
3. Class.....
4. Age.....
5. Name of your village.....
6. Ward.....division.....district.....
7. Are you aware of school feeding program? (**tick one**).... Yes.../ no....
8. If your answer is yes, where does it come from?.....
9. Do you get food in school? (**tick one**) yes.... /no...
10. If you answer is yes, are you satisfied by the food quantity and quality? (**tick one**) yes.... /no.....
11. What type of foods do you eat at school? Name them.....
12. Do you think getting food in school helps you? (**tick one**) yes.../no....
13. If yes, how do you think it helps you? (tick all that applies)
14. I don't get hungry when in school
15. I understand lesson better
16. Helps me to improve my health
17. Makes me come to school everyday
18. I don't know
19. If others, explain.....
20. Do you think that provision of food in schools contributes to students' enrollment? (**tick one**) yes.... /no....
21. Do you like the program to continue after the end of the World Food Program time? (**tick one**) yes.../no...
22. Is there any problem that you can see under this (school feeding program) program? (**tick one**) yes.../no.... If yes, list them here.....